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[Only specific discussions of acculturation have been placed in category 177. For many of the results of acculturation, see relevant functional categories, particularly 883 and 184.]

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Paramount chief and less for the territorial chiefs—and therefore earns annually about the same amount as a clerk. Rich African rulers such as the Nigerian emirs, the Barotse king, or some of the South-African potentates, do not exist in this area, and hence one of the important practical problems to discuss is the effect of this poverty of the Bemba chiefs on an economic system which is as closely linked with the political organization as is theirs.

White Contact.

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Permanent contact between Bemba and Europeans dates from 1890, when the White Fathers built a station at Kayambi on their north-eastern border and entered the country two years later. The British South Africa Co. established a post at Abercorn in 1893 and at Mirongo, near the present Government station at Chinsali, in 1896. These stations were built to put an end to slave raids in this area, but two years later (1898) the Administration intervened in a disputed succession to an important chieftainship and established themselves at Kasama, now the Provincial head-quarters, in the centre of the Bemba country, while the White Fathers, who entered the district more or less simultaneously, built their big station at Chilubula, twelve miles off, now the chief centre of the Diocese. There are at present Government stations at Kasama, Chinsali, Mpika (the site of a large aerodrome), Mporokoso, and Luwingu—to mention only those in the Bemba country proper. Most of these stations consist of a couple of houses built for the Government officials, an office, and a store, but Kasama is a bigger centre and has a white population of 54. Catholic influence is predominant in the heart of the Bemba country and the White Fathers have now built over ten stations in the tribal territory, mostly distributed in key situations near the villages of big chiefs. They also have a teachers' training school at Rosa to the north-east of Kasama. The Church of Scotland Mission has a big teachers' training-school at Lubwa to the south-east of the district, and stations near the borders of the Bemba country at Mwenzo and Chitambo. The London Missionary Society also has seven mission centres in or near Bemba territory including Senga, Mporokoso and Mbereshi. There is one Government School at Kasama. There is only one big European plantation, Shiwa Ndandu, to the south-west of

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the area which produces essential oils. Three European trading companies have native stores at most of the Government centres.

Thus the Europeans in Bemba country are exceedingly few in number,[1] and are limited to Government officials—administrative and medical—missionaries, and a few traders. In remoter parts of the country, e.g. the Chinsali or Mporokoso districts, many natives probably only see a white man in their villages once or twice a year when the District Officer is on tour or a European hunter travelling in the area. But in villages on the motor-road or near a Government station or mission, the contact between the two races is constant, and for this reason I shall distinguish these two types of village by using such terms as 'remote', 'distant', or 'old-fashioned' for the first, i.e. for communities more than two days' walk from a white settlement, and 'modern' or 'Europeanized' for the second.

As regards their material culture European goods have been adopted wherever financially possible. The younger men mostly wear shorts and such tattered remnants of shirts as remain to them. The others stick to the old fashion, a strip of cloth—ankle-length, worn high beneath the armpits with one end tucked in over the breast. This falls to the feet when walking about the village, but is hitched up short when the wearer is working. Women wear European dresses near white settlements, but otherwise find cloths more serviceable as they tear less easily. The old bark-cloth is rarely seen nowadays. Pottery is giving place to enamel ware and petrol tins round the white stores, but not in the ordinary villages. Some of the huts near Kasama are built with sun-dried brick and filled with home-made European furniture, but beyond this narrow radius the native hut is practically unchanged. There were 6081 native-owned guns, shot or muzzle-loading in a population of 84,645 taxable males in the Northern Province in 1934.[2]

The proportion of literate natives is exceedingly low, and few speak any English except the clerks or the domestic servants of the white man. Even on mission estates the number of people educated two generations back must be as yet very small. There is one Government doctor at Kasama in charge of a district nearly as

[1] 289 Europeans in the total Northern Province of N. Rhodesia, which far exceeds the Bemba territory, in 1934. Native Affairs Report 1934, p. 39.

[2] Ibid., pp. 41, 45.

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177 big as Wales, and here a small native hospital has been built. There is also a Mission doctor and hospital at Lubwa. Bemba agricultural methods are practically untouched. There are now two Government agricultural officers devoted to research in native agriculture, but during my visit there were none at all.

Character.

The temperamental characteristics of a primitive people are as important as their environment and social organization in determining the nature of their food-production, and to some extent, of course, each is a function of the other. But unfortunately it is just these temperamental traits that are so difficult to describe objectively. Until some more scientific criteria have been evolved the observer is bound to rely on his personal judgement and impressions. He thinks probably in terms of crude contrasts between the behaviour common in his own culture and that in the society he is studying, or if he is lucky enough to have a wide experience of a number of tribes in one area, he can make what are probably more fruitful comparisons between the reactions of each different people to a common situation, such as their behaviour towards the European or their power of adaptation to our civilization. Such broad comparisons are, I believe, the best way of describing the temperamental traits of a particular tribe at the present time. I shall therefore limit myself here to a summary of the comments usually made on the Bemba by Europeans who are familiar with several different tribes in this district, and add my own comparative observations of Bemba and Bisa characteristics made during a short visit to the latter people.

Moffat Thomson in his survey of the tribes of this area describes the Bemba as cheerful and light-hearted, and the same traits are mentioned by Gouldsbury and Sheane, but gaiety has for so long been considered a characteristic of the negro race in general that it is difficult to regard this as a specifically Bemba trait, although I admit that my first impression of a Bemba village was one of constant vivacity, chatter, and quick laughter, and it remains to this day my most permanent memory. It was rare to see a nervous worried face, although as many African observers have noticed, the old people when in repose sit for long periods in silence with a fixed expression of extreme sadness and almost disillusion.

More interesting from a comparative point of view are the

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dishes they use the word *ukukauka*, meaning to be sharp and acid, like lemon-juice, in the mouth,[1] but very few acid fruits were eaten before the introduction of different citrus trees by the white man. Children eat lemons unsweetened and enjoy the bite of the acid, unlike most Europeans. The word *ukusasa* is used of foods that have gone sour or fermented, like beer a few days old, while *ukulula* describes the bitter taste of some of the wild spinaches which the women try to make more palatable with the addition of potash salts (*ifishikisa*) prepared from bush plants or ground-nut sauce. Sweet foods, in the sense of those with a sugary taste, are rare, though honey is sometimes found and is considered a great delicacy, and the stalk of the sweet sorghum (*icisale*) is chewed by children. The fruit of the *umupundu* and the *umusuku* trees are also sweetish. But sweetness in the sense that we understand it is not a term that could be applied to any Bemba dish, and the word *ukuloa* which is used to translate the English 'sweet' really means to be pleasant or palatable. Sugar becomes almost a necessity when natives have become accustomed to it, and the children brought up in urban areas where it is the fashion to use it, find it impossible for a time to eat *ubwali* without it when they are sent back to their own villages.[2] Strong tastes such as ginger root, peppermint, aromatic or hot flavours apparently do not exist, except for the pepper known as *mpilipili*, which is occasionally dried and used as a relish and described as making the mouth hot.[3] In fact, strong tastes are definitely not characteristic of Bemba diet.

(*b*) *Salt hunger*. Of the special cravings recognized by the Bemba the longing for salt is probably the most pronounced. Salt has always been hard to get in this country, and meat and other foods richly supplied with it are rare. In the old days the natural salt found in the pans at Mpika[4] and crystallized out into roundish lumps was among the few goods traded about the country. These salt balls were valued so highly that they were used as tribute to be given to chiefs, who themselves distributed them as rewards to faithful followers. To a certain extent they do so still. The process of evaporating salt from river grasses is

[1] E. B. H. Goodall adds 'salty': *Some Wemba Words*, p. 44.

[2] It is interesting to note that honey is considered bad for a sick person because it 'makes the heart beat fast'.

[3] This is in marked difference to W. African diets, where most dishes of stew are highly seasoned with peppers of different kinds.

[4] Cf. Appendix B for composition.

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stringy and bitter to the taste, but the fact that these plants grow wild also tends to make them despised. For instance the wild orchid (*icikanda*) gathered by the children in September is considered with special contempt. A passing Lunda bragging to some Bemba villagers about the superior wealth and civilization of his own people, clinched the argument by saying, 'In our country we just divorce our wives if they serve *icikanda* relish, whereas yours have to cook it every day.' The burrowing cricket (*nyense*) and the mice, moles, or small birds which little boys trap are also despised. 'Food for children and for women in the hunger months' is an expression often used of such foods with an expression of contempt.

European foods are used only in the villages round white settlements and then apparently entirely for their kudos value, or else their ease in preparation.[1] Such articles are chiefly limited to tea, coffee, sugar, bread, and sardines. They seemed to me to be eaten as extras, used for purposes of entertainment or display, rather than an essential part of the diet, but the habit may have become more common since my visit to the area in 1934. Then clerks and native storekeepers in the Kasama townships used to be carried trays of tea in the middle of the morning by their wives, and in a neighbouring village I have seen four young men, after eating their ordinary meal of porridge and relish, sit down to share a tin of sardines on a table spread in full view of the community and ornamented with empty whisky bottles. They were described as having a 'sundowner'. In the same year a successful dance club run by an enterprising native returned from the mines, sold lemonade at 3*d*. a glass (i.e. a whole day's wages) and scones made from white flour in preference to supplying beer. It is purely want of money which prevents the extension of such customs in the modern type of village.

Magico-Religious Attitudes to Food.

(*a*) *Food taboos.* The whole question of food taboos has bulked very largely in anthropological literature from the earliest days. Such ritual restrictions on diet seem to have struck the attention of European observers immediately, and there is no doubt that where a particular class of food is tabooed permanently to a whole community or to a large section of it, such as a clan, age-grade, or

[1] Bread is liked chiefly for the latter reason I think.

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men come up to the pot later and kneel to take a short draught, usually in silence. Boys might be invited to take a drink as a joke by one of their elders, but they would never stay in the hut all the evening. Young girls chiefly drink at special women's beer-drinks, but on a general occasion they sometimes sit outside in groups of four or five and dare each other to go in to the drinking hut, with much giggling and jokes. I never saw them stay more than about a quarter of an hour. But all such additions to the circle take place later in the evening when the beer is already weak. It is clear in fact that with the formality practised under village conditions, the bulk of the three or four calabashes brewed at one go (*amatimba*) is distributed through the whole community but that the elder men and women have the largest proportion of this supply, the young men a smaller share, and the young women and boys an occasional drink in between dancing. Thus it might be estimated that the average consumption on any one night would be somewhere near 1½ pints per head for an older man or woman, 1 pint for a younger, and about ½ for a young girl.

Under modern conditions these rules of etiquette are often broken. There is apparently little obligation to share beer that is bought with money, and even when the owner has brewed her own supply there is a tendency for it to be shared with four or five people only, or even for it to be drunk alone. In such cases natives will start drinking in the morning and sit at it all day. The formalities of polite invitation and the order of drinking all go by the board, and in the circle of villages round a town like Kasama it would be fair to say that a large proportion of the younger men are regularly drunk every Saturday and Sunday in a way that is quite unlike the slight intoxication of an ordinary village beer-drink. On the other hand, in one or two modern communities, i.e. those on the grounds of some of the protestant missions or in the near neighbourhood, a large percentage of teetotallers is common, since the pledge is taken by many church members. But at present no other substitute form of entertainment seems to have been discovered for the Bemba, since tea is a prohibitive price in this area and the various non-alcoholic drinks made of millet, such as have been issued from time to time by different mining companies, are not commonly made. The drinking of beer, therefore, besides providing a valuable addition to a poor diet, continues to be essential to a normal existence in this tribe.

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have sons, he says is 'to throw away the seed' (*ukupose mbuto*), but to have daughters is to 'set up a local group' (*ukusange cifulo*).

In a new village there will probably be one matrilocal family group of the type described, i.e. a headman and his married daughters and their husbands and possibly one or two married granddaughters. But when the community has been in existence for a long time, or the headmanship has passed to one or two men in succession, there may be three or four of these matrilocal extended families composed of the daughters of contemporaries of the headman, either men who originally came from another village to marry one of his near relatives and have chosen to live with him all their married lives,[1] or contemporaries of the last headman who have preferred to remain living with his heir. These heads of matrilocal family groups are the most influential members of the community and are known as the 'great ones' of the village (*bakalamba*), and the household of a man who has several married daughters living under his care is known as a 'big house' (*ifyanda ikalamba*). Of the headman of one village who had seven married daughters and their husbands and children—some of the latter also married—living with him, natives exclaimed with rapture: 'Truly that is a big house! My word! That is luck indeed!'[2]

Thus, the chief principle of local association in Bemba society is a man's legal right to the services of his son-in-law. The rule of residence results directly from the type of marriage contract. Among a number of other Bantu peoples, the transfer of material goods, such as cattle, is the essential element of the marriage transaction, and determines the relationship between the groups so united throughout the married life of the couple concerned. But among the Bemba, the marriage payment is insignificant, or was so until the present day. It consisted of a small betrothal present (*nsalamo*) such as a bracelet, a couple of bark-cloths given by the bridegroom to his father-in-law at the initiation of the girl (*fye cisungu*), and at the time of the marriage ceremony (*mpango*), these latter now being replaced by cloth, or a few

[1] This was apparently quite common in the old days, though rare now. In most villages one or two old men are described as having 'come here to marry' and in one village (Kacienja, near Shiwa Dandu 1931 and 1934) a man had actually become headman of his wife's village, assuming authority over her relatives, although he was of course unable to officiate at ceremonies to the ancestral spirits of the community, which office he delegated to a member of his wife's lineage group. [2] *Ifyanda ikalamba ifena! Mwandi! Te kushyuka!*

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601 third party. He could send for him to accompany him to war
604 or to make a long journey at the chief's bidding. Case histories
614 of older Bemba show frequent instances of men having settled in villages far from their original birthplace because they had 'followed their *nalume*' on some distant expedition in warrior days and had remained there. Nowadays the *nalume* can only exert these powers if he is of superior status to the father, or if the latter is away, or dead. The *nalume* has also certain rights over his maternal niece—also called *umwipwa*. He is consulted about her marriage and usually given a share of her marriage payment (*mpango*), which is technically speaking 'eaten' by the father.[1]

●177 Direct European teaching and the introduction of a money
604 currency have strengthened the father's authority over his children
593 as against those of the mother's brother. The former pays tax for the household, buys the children's clothes, and pays the school fees. But, on the other hand, marriage is less stable under modern conditions, partly owing to the break-down of marriage morality and partly to the absence of so many men at the mines. In these circumstances, those few men who remain in the villages are bound to look after their sisters' children as well as their own in the last resort.

601 The paternal aunt, the *nyina senge*, also has rights over her
604 brother's children and particularly his daughters. She is believed
614 to have power to bless or curse her brother's daughter (*umwana senge*) with fertility or barrenness, and is much feared on that account.[2] In the old days she could demand her niece as a substitute wife for her husband—the *mpokoleshi* marriage described on p. 115, or as an additional one.[3] But the rights and duties of the *nyina senge* do not determine the residence of her *bepwa*, male and female, to any extent. However, it must be remembered
582 that cross-cousin marriages unite the households of brother and sister even more intimately than before, and that where the boy marries his *nyina senge's* daughter, he will go to live in her village, just as he who contracts a union with his *nalume's* child, goes to live in the latter's community. The sample village analysed

[1] This custom, an act of grace to the *nalume*—not his right, has become more important nowadays since money from 2*s*. 6*d*. to £1 has been substituted for the two bark-cloths given as *mpango* in the old days.

[2] And also given a share of the *mpanga* if possible.

[3] Nowadays this right seems to be rarely exerted. I only met three cases of its occurrence.

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Hence, though the Bemba village is a kinship unit, its composition is by no means rigidly fixed. There are certain main principles of local association, but the practice of temporary matrilocal marriage makes for a good deal of change from one community to another, and the even balance between the powers of the father and those of the maternal uncle allow a man a number of possible allegiances.[1] Admiration for rank, or for wealth under modern conditions, sometimes cut across the principles of kinship, so that men may be found living with more distant rather than nearer relatives. The former have a higher status. Added to all these factors the Bemba are great visitors and from childhood up spend months or even a year or two 'seeing' relatives (*ukumona bantu*) in different parts of the country, and this habit of movement seems definitely part of their social system.[2]

Modern Changes in Village Structure.

In spite of the possible variations in the composition of a Bemba village, it remains a closely knit unit. The pattern of behaviour between the different relatives and the legal obligations that bind them are traditionally fixed. If a man settles down in a community, and builds a hut there, he does so usually as a son-in-law of a man of that village, more rarely as a brother, a maternal nephew, or a maternal grandson, and very occasionally as a son. If a woman leaves her parent's village and joins another community she goes there either as the wife of a man returning to live with his people, or as a deserted or widowed woman taking refuge with the members of her own matrilineal descent group. In either case, the behaviour of each new arrival is fixed, and also their type of economic inter-dependence as will be described in the next chapter. In a modern village there are two marked changes. In the first place these settlements are no longer composed of close relatives of the headman, but consist of a series of small kinship groups —two or three households, a mother and two married daughters,

[1] Compare the much more fixed structure of the village in a matrilineal society where patrilocal marriage is practised, i.e. in Melanesian societies where the boy goes to live with his maternal uncle in adolescence and marries there, or in the composition of the kraal among the strongly patrilocal, patrilineal Bantu societies in South Africa.

[2] Missionaries claim that the building of permanent villages in this area would ease the problem of locating schools. This is true, but it would be unlikely to stop the children of the village being sent to 'see' their grandparents 30–50 miles away for six months at a time.

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a man and his wife and his mother, &c. In these circumstances the unit of economic co-operation is smaller than formerly; the families detach themselves more easily and go to join other villages according to their fancy; and the authority of the headman is lessened, since his kinship with them is slighter than in the old-fashioned village.

A typical kinship unit of the old-fashioned type is described in greater detail in Chap. X. An analysis of the social structure of a number of such communities can be found in Appendix, Table E, for those who have a special interest in kinship problems. The economic system based on these types of local grouping must now be described.

The Village Scene.

The huts in a Bemba village fill a circular or oval space in the middle of a ring of garden-beds. Those on the outskirts are built side by side, anything from 3 to 20 ft. apart, each with its door facing to the centre. The huts in the centre are scattered without much determinate plan.[1] When building a village the older men take the good sites such as small eminences or ant-hills, and their huts tend to be larger and better built. Their sons-in-law either build close to them, or else, if there are sufficient young men to form a group of their own, these construct their huts round the open dancing space (*ulubansa*) at one side of the village. The granaries of house-holders living on the outskirts stand in a ring on the garden-beds, the others are placed near their owners' huts. The men's club-houses (*nsaka*) are nothing more than open shelters, roofs supported on uprights, and these are usually built at each end of the village.

Huts are circular or square in shape,[2] with broad verandas in the case of men of substance. A man and his wife sleep in each hut, but any child over two or three (the weaning age) is sent to sleep with its grandparents, and in an old couple's house it is common to find five or six small children stretched in a row on a mat in front of the fire. Young girls usually sleep in the hut of a young married woman whose husband is temporarily away, or with a widowed woman. They often change their sleeping-

[1] In the larger chiefs' villages the huts are divided into *icitente* (*ifitente*), separate areas under the control of a headman.

[2] The square huts are the more modern variety.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE DOMESTIC UNIT

Daughter Households.

252 614 IF the kinship of the women who regularly thresh and grind together be studied, it will be found that they mostly stand in the mother-daughter, grandmother-granddaughter or sister-sister relationship—that they are in fact the women of the matrilocal group. Among the Bemba, joint domestic activities are based on the kinship of the women householders, not that of the men as in patrilocal communities. These closely related women form a co-operating group—grandmother, mothers, and daughters with the 614 grandfather at their head. The young man who marries into the group is in fact almost an outsider during his first few years of wedded life and only gradually acquires economic control over his household, let alone the right of choice of residence, or power to 583 remove his children to his own village. The cattle handed over as *lobola* to the bride's father in South Africa are described as a permanent guarantee of the good behaviour of the married couple towards each other, but among the Bemba the bridegroom has to work for some years in a position of economic dependence in order to prove his worth as a husband or father at all, and during this time his wife can be removed if he fails to carry out his obligations. The bride and bridegroom at marriage have no food-supply [591] of their own. On his bethrothal a youth goes to live in his bride's village.[1] He cuts gardens for his father-in-law, directly under the latter's orders, and does any other work, such as hoeing, that may be required of him.[2] He builds himself his own hut, which his future bride, possibly a young girl of 10 or 12, sweeps and tidies for him, and in which she is later allowed to go and sleep until signs of approaching puberty make her mother afraid she

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[1] The following description applies to the system of marriage apparently practised before the coming of the white man, and still observed with certain modifications in the majority of cases. The changes caused by the introduction of money payments for service and by the absence of the young men at the mines will be discussed separately.

[2] Chiefly the tree-cutting preparatory to making millet gardens. A son-in-law always describes his own marriage as, 'I cut trees for him for so many years', and the money sent back to his father-in-law by a youth at the mines is called 'money for tree-cutting' (*ndalama shya kutema*)—now about 10s. a year.

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262 592 garden close to that of Malalo so that his wife might be happy working with her mother and sisters and might get additional help in this way. The youngest son-in-law, Dicksonee (E4), had done two years' work for his wife's family before marrying Jani, but was now working locally for a European and only returned from time to time to do gardening.

593 ●177 The last son-in-law, ShiMutale (E5), was an interesting character, as he represented a special type of graceless good-for-nothing found in the Bemba country to-day, a young man who gets all he can from his wife's people under the old system of kinship obligations, but gives little or nothing in return. ShiMutale was always elegantly dressed in a spotless white shirt, frequently washed and ironed in public. He was constantly parting and arranging his long hair in a small mirror according to the latest fashion, and spent most of his time lounging in the *nsaka*, playing with his baby son or twanging a Bemba lyre. His most active amusement was bicycling madly around the village swearing at the children in English, of which language he knew no other phrases. I watched him from my tent door during this month, and I must admit that I had not believed it possible that an active young man of about 25 could have done nothing so consistently for so many days on end without feeling the time drag. ShiMutale had at one time worked for Europeans and sometimes announced his intention of doing so again, but in the meantime he stayed where he was. He had paid no *mpanga* for his bride, claiming the cross-cousin relationship as an excuse for not doing so, and as will be seen from the table, worked exactly six days out of twenty as compared with his father-in-law's twelve.

This case is described in detail because it illustrates the way in which a certain number of young Bemba contrive to shirk their marriage obligations under modern conditions, and thus place a heavy strain on the economic resources of the matrilocal group. They do so usually on the plea that they are resting after their work at the mines, or are about to take other jobs 'soon', and they are able to flout their duties with impunity, since the shortage of men in the district makes parents willing to put up with sons-in-law whom they would never have tolerated under the old régime. A quarrel which broke out between ShiMutale and his wife during this month illustrates this fact, and also shows clearly how the period of matrilocal marriage acts to a

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certain extent as a time of trial for the young husband, even under the changed conditions of the present day.

On this occasion ShiMutale asked his wife, who seemed devoted to him in spite of his laziness and violence, to boil some sweet potatoes for him early in the morning so that he could entertain his friends. The potatoes were his own possession, since he had dug the beds on which they grew, although he had made no millet garden. NaMutale refused, because this would have made her too late to join her mother and sisters at work in the gardens. ShiMutale swore at her and pushed her roughly and she, after the manner of all Bemba women when insulted within earshot of their relatives, shot out a piercing yell. In a moment every one was at their door-way staring, and NaMukonda flung herself across the village in full torrent of abusive defence. This is a regular stage in every matrimonial quarrel among the Bemba—the arrival of the girl's mother, and, if possible, the man's too. People look at each other significantly and say, 'Look there! The mother has come.' They mean that the battle is set. On this occasion the villagers gathered together, and even the quiet Malalo followed in the wake of his more violent wife to support their insulted, but scarcely injured, child. The next stage in this typical quarrel came quickly. The angry women forced their way into the hut and threw out the cooking- and carrying-baskets, and removed the pots—all the women's possessions in fact. This is also the prescribed conduct in a serious matrimonial squabble.[1] The onlookers, like a chorus, commented: 'See, they have thrown out the pots.' Malalo finally led his sobbing daughter away, and the 'beaten' girl retired to her mother's hut with NaMukonda and her other daughter following, shouting obscene abuse.

The woman's family refused to cook for the husband, and though there was no chance of ShiMutale starving, more especially as he had a number of his own relatives in the village, yet the strike of the cooks had a special significance. It was a repudiation of the legal obligations of the marriage contract, just as the removal of NaMutale's cooking-pots in the first instance was a sign that a serious quarrel had begun. ShiMutale strolled about the village all day long, twanging the Bemba one-stringed lyre, with elaborate unconcern. His young friends idling in the men's shelter amused

[1] I have notes of eight matrimonial quarrels in which the procedure was just the same.

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593 177 themselves by shouting to him slyly from time to time, 'Getting hungry, sir?' To which he replied on each occasion with would-be jauntiness, 'No sir! I am extremely full' (*Yo Mukwai! Naikuta sana*). He must have known, however, that he was not in a strong position as a son-in-law who had paid no *mpanga* and was known as a wastrel. Taunts to this effect had been freely shouted by NaMukonda in the heat of the quarrel, and the refusal of the in-laws to cook might have meant anything from a public protest to the beginning of a definite break, and in the latter case, ShiMutale as a father who had paid nothing at his marriage and had done no years of service, would have no legal rights to his small son.

The quarrel in this case ended quickly. NaMutale forgot her injuries and slipped back to her husband's hut after dark. NaMukonda, apparently rather worn after the morning's screaming, sat brooding on the veranda of her hut alone. Her comments on the affair were instructive. She had not liked the marriage, but the man was a cross-cousin. 'There are no husbands for the girls nowadays'—the Bemba mothers' inevitable refrain. If things went on like this the marriage would break up and the child would belong to 'us'. But then NaMutale was in the wrong in this quarrel! 'Really, the young people of to-day!' she said. 'The girls give their husbands no respect. A woman should always submit to her husband (*ukunakila ku mulume*) but now they just disobey. Then their husbands beat them and then', ruefully, in memory of the morning's agitation, 'it twists their mothers' hearts (*ukuongoloka mitima yabo*). And then what do you think? In the evening they say, "I like him again." They don't want to sleep alone on a bed all night, and so they go back to their husbands all the same. Really!' she repeated with a shrug, and eyes raised heavenwards in protest, 'The young people of to-day!' (*Aba uno mwaka.*)

593 Whether NaMukonda was right in attributing all matrimonial troubles to modern morals is impossible to judge. It seems to me probable that any system which involves a period of trial of the son-in-law in his wife's village must result in unstable equilibrium during the first years of married life, and that the elements of tension must have existed before, even if quarrels were less frequent and less open.[1] But this case illustrates clearly the strains

[1] A more serious quarrel occurred in the same month in the house of NaCi-

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peremptory demands upon him, and I noticed that in old-fashioned villages this was often done, but the same would not be true of the wife's mother's brother. In the same way the father's sister, the *nyina senge* can ask a maternal niece for baskets of grain, although she would be unlikely to do so in the case of her maternal nephew.

The headman can ask his villagers to help him with food if he is in want, although this would be an unlikely occurrence, but the rights of a chief to send for supplies to help him in sudden difficulties, particularly over entertaining, are frequently exercised (cf. p. 253). In fact, so much is the idea of authority associated with the right to levy dues of this kind that natives use the word *ukutula* or 'to give tribute' of any demand made by an elder relative of a younger.

Modern Changes in Kinship Dues.

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It is common knowledge that in many Bantu societies money is now being substituted for the older kinship dues levied on food or cattle. To what extent is this the case in the Bemba area? We have seen that the Bemba husband occasionally tries to sell the contents of his granary, whereas formerly, though he was actually the owner of the millet store, he allowed his wife the use of it. In the same way I have seen elder brothers make demands on their juniors for shillings or sixpences instead of asking for a portion of their grain or beer. But this seems only to occur in districts near white towns, and the practice was confined as far as I saw it to men of the clerk or domestic servant type. Big dues levied on young men's mine-earnings, such as are reported from so many parts of South Africa, and from the Ila district in Northern Rhodesia,[1] seemed very uncommon among the Bemba. I think this fact can probably be accounted for in two ways. First, in a society in which the power of the mother's family and that of the father's is very evenly divided, the elders are not in such a strong position to exact dues from their younger relatives as they are in a markedly patriarchal or matriarchal society. Among the Bemba it may be the father, the maternal uncle, or the maternal grandfather who is the boy's male guardian, and it will depend on personality and general circumstances which finally maintains his authority, but in a typical patrilineal society such as those of the

[1] Smith and Dale, op. cit., vol. i, p. 385.

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Southern or Eastern Bantu there is no doubt that the father, and after him the elder brother, has the predominant rights over the property of the young. Secondly, and this is a point which we have to recur to frequently, the fact that the Bemba never kept cattle or any form of wealth that could be measured or counted naturally affects their attitude to money. To change from the 'cattle standard' to money currency appears to be an easy transition in some ways, and all over Africa natives are earning money and turning it into cattle or, conversely, giving cattle to relatives who sell the beasts and so get money. But where kinship prerogatives consist of undefined rights to exact service and to demand food when in need the substitution of money seems a less obvious equivalent. Where it occurs, and it is beginning to occur, it creates an entirely new relationship between elder and younger, son-in-law and father-in-law, rather than a modification of the old. Nor have the elders the same bargaining power with the young as in some Bantu tribes at the present day. We are told from such widely distant areas as South Africa and Uganda that boys who earn money away from this tribal area return to give a share to their fathers or brothers for fear the latter will not provide them with cattle or goats for their marriage payments.[1] The Bemba boy on the other hand gave service for his bride and was therefore not beholden to his elders to any large extent, and is not so to-day. He gives money to his father-in-law for his bride, and he distributes presents among his relatives as he pleases, but this is considered an act of grace, I think, and not a due. It is not true to say that the young Bemba of to-day are hampered in their progress by the exorbitant demands of the old.

Education in Distribution.

To conclude, the Bemba system of food consumption is determined by rules of individual ownership subject to the claims of elder relatives. How is this set of economic values impressed on each new generation? What sanctions exist to enforce the various rules involved?

Among the Bemba it is clear that there are certain well-marked attitudes towards the use of food which the child learns to adopt almost from babyhood. In the infant's life edible objects are things which his mother and near relatives never refuse to give him on

[1] K. Oberg, 'Banyankole Kinship Organization', *Africa*, vol. xi, April 1938, pp. 153, 158.

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Sharing and Supernatural Sanctions.

This definite training in a particular method of distributing food is still further enforced by supernatural sanctions. The Bemba are deeply convinced that relatives who die with a sense of injury have the power to return and afflict the living with misfortune, illness, and even a lingering death from a wasting disease. To injure a man or a woman in this way, and in particular to deny them food when hungry, ill, or cold, is to refuse them their kinship dues. In fact, the definition usually given of such a haunting spirit (*iciwa*) is that it is 'someone who died with grief catching him at the throat' because when he was old his children would not give him food. Of such a calamity the Bemba are genuinely afraid. Even sophisticated young men of the present time speak nervously of the possibility of certain near relatives, particularly the mother, or the mother's brother, dying aggrieved, and there is no doubt that the fear of supernatural punishment is still a very strong sanction enforcing the sharing of food and the provision for dependents.

Besides these positive inducements to share, it must be remembered that the Bemba system of distribution is closely correlated with their type of housing and particular methods of preparing food. We have described the housewife threshing and grinding out of doors, with her store cupboard at some distance from her hut. It is impossible, in a Bemba village, to conceal the fact that extra flour has been prepared, that beer is ready for drinking, or that there is an unexpected supply of meat. The complete publicity of primitive housekeeping is one of the most effective sanctions for the system of distribution of food which they commonly practise. It is important here to notice that Bemba housing is changing under the influence of the white man. The native is taught to build huts with more rooms and even to store his food in his own enclosure. It remains to be seen whether the Bantu will continue to be so generous, according to our standards, when they can conceal their supplies as effectively as we do ourselves.

It can be said therefore that if the Bemba people share their meals and extend hospitality to a wider circle of relatives than we do, it is because from their earliest years they have never been able to consider food as something which could be procured, owned,

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new grain is ripe? Why does one woman serve out porridge so that every one gets up quickly feeling satisfied, while the guests of another eat and still feel empty? The answer is magic (*ubwanga*). Food, and millet in particular, is specially subject to witchcraft (*ubuloshi*). Wizards stick horns in their granaries to attract the grain of other men. They also send out mysterious black birds (*mawa*) at night to steal the food of neighbours and convey it to their own granaries. How does this happen? The Bemba answers that he does not know, but that it is a well-known fact that wizards have more food than other men. A more subtle form of sorcery takes the goodness out of the millet while it is still growing in the gardens, so that when it is reaped and eaten it has no power to satisfy a hungry man. To protect himself against these dangers counter-magic is the gardener's only hope, and even without definitely suspecting witchcraft, all the Bemba I questioned told me that food could not be expected to last unless some magic of durability had been performed—a magic rite that would keep the granary full (*ukuisula pe na pe*) and would act upon the food so that one little eating pot would satisfy a family instead of two, and 'the little bit of porridge give strength to the heart' (*akabwali kalekosho mutima*).

All these results are produced by the Bemba charm *icibyalilo*, still almost universally used to-day. The form of the charm varies from family to family although there are certain common elements, such as the doctoring of the grain with medicine smoked through it (*ukufutikila*) or by sprinkling (*ukusansa*), the mixing of the old harvest with the new to maintain continuity, and some rite of sympathetic magic by which people are made to feel full with the new grain in order that this property of satisfaction may be conferred on the rest of the crop. All sorts of intermediate forms exist, and the fact that Christian women sometimes sign themselves with the cross before reaping to make the food last shows how strong is this belief that nothing but supernatural aid can carry a woman safely through the hazards of Bemba catering.

The full *icibyalilo* rites are complex and take place in three stages. At sowing, the medicinal herb (*umuti*), sometimes mixed with an activating principle like scrap iron or a piece of rubber, is mixed with the seeds that are sown and sometimes a small portion is buried in the centre of the field or little fire-stands built there for the cooking of the new grain at the approaching harvest. At

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556 We can see in fact that as far as the production of a large surplus of millet is concerned there were no strong motives in this society to do so, either to attain kudos, to fulfil marriage contracts, to increase material prosperity, or to leave wealth to the next generation.

New Economic Ambitions.

556 This general attitude to accumulation exists to a large extent
● 177 to-day, and among the older men the same political ambitions remain operative. The desire to build up a village is still very pronounced, and I have known cases where members of the royal clan, earning good wages at the mines, threw up their jobs if offered a headmanship at home. In the same way, I found that young men who had succeeded to some headmanship or small office, such as a hereditary priesthood, early in life, preferred to hold this position rather than leaving to work for Europeans.

177 But for the rest of the community the introduction of British rule, money, and European goods has cut completely across old
291 economic objectives with marked effects on the food-supply.
556 In particular, the strength of the Bemba craving for clothes is almost impossible to explain to a reader without African experience. To understand it, it would be necessary to listen to the constant talk of natives about clothes and prices anywhere near a white town, to watch the men and women crowding round the European stores in a place like Kasama—where the tailors sit and machine their customers' frocks in the street—or to see the swagger of the booted and trousered young man in front of the women of his village. This would give some idea of the passionate desire of these people to possess, by some means or other, European clothes. It must be remembered that cloth was always thought valuable in this area since its first appearance in the hands of Arab traders in the middle of the nineteenth century. Bales of cloth were exchanged for slaves and remained the chiefs' monopoly, so that to wear cotton cloth, as distinct from the local bark-cloth, was a sign of royal favour. In any case the Bemba, like the Luba-speaking peoples of the Congo, have been described as fully clothed up to their armpits by the earliest

contents and that of the Bemba in which even the householder is not quite aware of the amount of food she possesses. B. Malinowski, Coral Gardens and *their Magic*, 1935, vol. i, pp. 242–3, 245–55, 257.

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travellers in those regions.[1] So the desire for garments of some sort is not a new one, but it is the first time in history that it has been open to commoners, as distinct from chiefs and notables, to raise their status in this way. Clothes are a source of excitement and delight at this stage of transition, and a sign of distinction between the civilized man and the bush native.[2]

I have described this craving for European goods because it directly affects the production and storage of food. Conditions in this area are such that money cannot be regularly earned or accumulated, or used to produce an all-round improvement in the standard of living. But the desire for clothes is at present one of the chief incentives which drives men to leave the territory to look for work, and a man gone to the mines is said to be away 'clothing his wife'. Further, as regards the stay-at-home native, it can be said at once that where millet can be sold for money, either to Europeans or to urban natives, the natives always succumb to the temptation. It is unfortunate that in this area the chief saleable crop is a staple food, for it means that the people sell their supplies often at the lowest prices without thought of the hunger they must presently suffer. Dealers in grain will tell you that in times of famine millet is often produced somehow and from somewhere, if only it can be sold for money. I have myself seen women near the motor road sell their last basket of grain for a cheap cotton vest torn in a week with the hard garden work. The old realistic attitude towards the value of food described in Chapter III seems completely abandoned in these circumstances. Old men sometimes say: 'You can't fill your belly with shillings', but the younger men and women would rather go without food than clothing, and wherever money has been substituted for tribal obligations formerly paid in work or foodstuffs, these sums are never spent on food, but always on European goods. The cases of the payments to the father-in-law have already been described, but it is equally true that money paid to the chief in lieu of his garden labour would

[1] As compared with the Ila on the Kafue River who have remained naked until very recently.

[2] A missionary, clad himself in an open shirt, shorts, and sandals, once asked one of his teachers why he went about on a sweltering day in a thick suit with long woollen stockings and two shirts. The teacher replied: 'You could go naked but people would still know you had clothes in your cupboard, but if I didn't wear my clothes people would say I was an uneducated fellow with nothing more than a pair of shorts.'

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probably not be used for this purpose but for acquiring European objects of different kinds.

To conclude, we are dealing with an economic system in which the accumulation of large quantities of any type of material goods was neither very possible nor considered desirable. The accumulation of food was not an end in itself for the chief or notable, but rather a means to enable him to build up a large following of people which was to him the highest aim in life. His economic assets consisted in rights over food produced by others as well as in the cultivation of millet himself. For the commoner, the possession of excessive food supplies was definitely considered unsuitable, and people were afraid to admit they had such a store. In short the surplus crop was not a Bemba ideal. Under modern conditions the desire for European goods, and in particular clothes, leads the people to squander even their available food supplies on objects which have become more important to them.

The Use of Money.

Money has been used in this territory for about thirty years. The first white administrators in the district were told to encourage its circulation as 'a civilizing influence' and, as soon as possible, wages were paid and taxes levied in currency and not in kind. European stores were opened shortly after, and very few of these shops will now accept payment in kind instead of money. It is, therefore, worth considering this specific question: Has the introduction of a money currency facilitated the distribution of food?

In the first place, the use of coins in everyday life is still very limited. This is chiefly due to the shortage of money in the area as a whole. No native could hope to substitute cash payments for all his present kinship obligations or other needs of life because he would rarely be in a position to do so. But it is also a fact that the Bemba still use money in a completely different fashion from our own. They regard it as a medium to be used in specific transactions only. These are, naturally, the purchase of European goods and the payment of tax, and, less obviously, marriage payments, sums paid for native crafts, the fulfilment of ceremonial obligations, and debts of honour. The Bemba buy European goods with money because they can get them in no other way. They pay taxes in money for the same reason. The substitution of small sums for the marriage payment has been an easy transition from

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622 651 643 the chief's authority as well as an economic task carried out for him. Nowadays labourers who arrive at the capital must do formal obeisance to the chief by rolling on the ground in front of him and clapping (*ukutota*), and when they leave they repeat the process with full ceremony. Chiefs seemed to me to speak of this act of homage with pleasure. One described the *umulasa* system in words like this. 'They come: they work for three days: I make them porridge and then they come and make obeisance and go.' It is interesting to watch the men and women returned from the fields gathering on the outskirts of the village so that they may all walk in to the chief's enclosure together, and make their salute formally.

622 651 •177 643 The *umulasa* system itself has been very strongly affected by European contact. In the early days of British administration it was discouraged, though never actually forbidden. Now many officials seem conscious of the value of the system as maintaining the chief's authority, but the latter's rights to *umulasa* cannot be enforced in a white court since they are held to be contrary to the Geneva Conventions on 'Forced Labour'. This lack of Government support has lead to the refusal of many natives to do their service. The introduction of paid labour has also struck at the roots of the system. 'The white man came to teach us not to work except for money', one old Bemba said, when bewailing the uncompromising attitude of the modern youth.[1] The exact amount of labour now done for the chief is difficult to assess. It is clearly very much less than before. Of twelve villages I visited during 1931 and 1933 five had sent no labour during the year (three of these owing to ritual privilege) and the others had sent contingents varying from two men and women to ten and twelve women respectively. The service is limited now by common consent to the inside of a week or even three days. From figures taken at Citimukulu's village during a nine-month period from April to December 1933, I estimate that 561 men were called up to work and 329 women, and that these worked on an average 3·89 days in

[1] The common association in the native mind between Christianity and European economic values is clear from the statement of a young Bemba asked to help some one in a difficulty, 'I am a Christian. I don't do things for nothing.'

[2] The figures of men-days worked were as follows:

MEN. Tree-cutting 855; piling branches 143; sowing millet 89; reaping sorghum 68; fetching food from different villages 14.

WOMEN. Piling branches 446; carrying grain from temporary granaries 146;

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the case of the men and 3·5 days for the women.[2] These labourers were drawn from 81 villages out of 160 showing that it is very far from true that every Bemba works for his chief at the present time. Added to this the number of adult males at work outside the territory means that the supply of available labour is almost halved. Two small chieftainesses, Canda we Eiya and Mulenga, complained that they could get no gardens made for them without the support of their territorial chiefs, and in May 1933 Mwamba, one of the biggest of the latter, had chosen the site for his capital, but could not get sufficient labour to build it until the copper slump sent men home to their villages. Citimukulu himself constantly grumbled that he could not get his gardens made, and even his band of personal followers and singers was very much reduced.

It is nevertheless a fact that the chief's rights are still recognized, even if he cannot always enforce them. Where money payments are substituted for tribute labour—and this only takes place very occasionally—it is an accepted principle that the *mfumu* should pay below the current rate. Thus in March 1934 Citimukulu summoned two bricklayers to work *umulasa* for him, offering them 2*s*. 6*d*. a week instead of 7*s*. 6*d*., the current wage, and this sum was considered generous. Chiefs also pay the tax of some of their followers, in return for work done, and in this case the latter usually get food and other court perquisites, and do an indefinite amount of labour. I saw Nkula pay a 4*s*. court fine for two subjects who were unable to find the money, but he ordered them to build him a house in return, for which the current pay was 10*s*. The legitimate claims of the chief to service are still perfectly well recognized in compromise arrangements of this kind.

It is also obvious that no system has yet been devised as a substitute for *umulasa* labour. To pay even the small force of labour Citimukulu employed during the period in which I took notes, he would have required nearly £56 at the current rate of wages out of a total annual salary of £60 for all personal and tribal expenses. So that it must be acknowledged that even if the *umulasa* system

hoeing village beds 126; fetching fish and other foods 76; cleaning paths 96; digging up ground-nuts or Livingstone potato beds 68; reaping 12.

TOTAL 970 men-days.

For the building of the chief's new huts in a new village 807, including 421 spent making a brick court-house, as against 386 to build 10 huts of the ordinary type. 174 men-days were spent by the women in white-washing or making cement floors of the same houses.

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is functioning inefficiently at the present time (cf. p. 264) it is the only means by which the political machinery of the tribe continues to exist.

Tribute as Rent.

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It will be asked at once how far this tribute in labour and kind can be classed as rent? If by this term we mean a fixed amount of work or goods given in return for the right to use a fixed amount of land, then obviously the dues of the Bemba chief cannot be so described. They are part of a series of mutual obligations observed between subject and chief, of which the right to land is one of the gains to the commoner, and the right to service just one of a series of chiefly prerogatives. To make the situation clearer we should list the advantages both parties gained by the arrangement. Why did the commoner work for the chief? Partly because he was afraid of his power and partly because there were positive inducements to do so. We saw that a commoner who made a garden in the chief's *icalo* without permission was liable to have his crops seized in the old days. Some natives now say that refusal to work *umulasa* or *ukutula* would have meant mutilation in pre-European times: others argue, 'No. Since it would be stupid to cut off the hand of a man who would then be unable to work *umulasa* for his chief again.' One man told me that with the first default a man would have been scolded, and at the second his chickens and granary would have been seized. But in actual fact no old man I talked to could remember an actual instance of a man refusing to pay his dues, and I think such occasions were probably limited to open acts of defiance on the part of powerful young members of the royal clan trying to set up power on their own. Of commoners I constantly got the answer, *Ukuti bakana shyani?*, 'And why should they refuse?', with genuine surprise in the tone. The fact that the Bemba believed that their gardens were unlikely to yield without the chief's blessing has been stressed again and again in these pages. While some natives deny that the *imipashi* would refuse their beneficence to men who refused to work for their chief or give tribute, others assert equally emphatically that this is so, and all are convinced that it is definitely unlucky to offend him. To say of a chief, a white man, or any one in high authority that he is angry (*ukufulwa*) is a serious thing, even at the present day. Small lapses are not expected to be followed automatically by

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land to his individual advantage, and such phenomena as absentee landlordism, mortgaging, and excessive fractionation, that have been so pronounced among the Indian peasantry, may appear. At the present, rent-paying only exists in a few areas, particularly on the copper-belt, where the Government allocated a number of eight-acre plots to be let to natives living round Ndola, Luanshya, and Nkana at rentals of about £2. 10s. a year. This step, taken in order to give the urban native a feeling of security and individual possession, was eagerly welcomed by men of initiative as a means by which they could build their own houses and provide accommodation for their dependent relatives, whom it was then practically impossible to house in the Government locations or mine compounds. But, paradoxically enough, the introduction of rent seemed to me to have produced the feeling of uncertainty as to the use of land for the first time. This was partly because the rent was a new imposition in native eyes,[1] and partly because the dues of the chief were and are enacted in commodities the people possess —labour and food—instead of money, which they sometimes cannot obtain. Also the produce taken to a chief varies according to the state of the harvest, and only sufficient for the ruler's own needs is demanded when times are hard. But rent is a fixed sum whether the money is available or not. The only natives I ever met who were definitely anxious about their possession of land were those on the three-acre Government plots outside Luanshya, who were caught by the slump in 1933 and were threatened with eviction if they did not find rent. They seemed quite content that the Government, like the chief, should levy toll on their earnings when they had any, but thought it unjust that they should be asked to pay money if they had no means of getting any paid work. I heard for the first time the statement that it was no use developing the ground, since one might not have the money to pay the rent next year.

As a matter of fact, there does not seem any reason why the Bemba should not adopt a fixed method of cultivation in the rural districts and adapt their traditional form of occupier tenancy to

rights over land from governmental functions'. *An African People in the Twentieth Century*, 1934, p. 166.

[1] Near Kasama I was visited by four men returned from the mines who asked indignantly why the missionaries taught that the land belonged to the High God (*Lesa*) if the people had to pay rent to the Government for it?

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423 427 ● 177 this end. It has been shown in many parts of Africa that the Bantu system based on the practice of shifting cultivation is quite easily adapted, without any need of Government interference, to situations in which bush land becomes limited or acquires additional value for any other reason. The Bemba rules of ownership of village gardens or deserted house sites, or the more complex regulations of land tenure found among the Bisa on the Bangweolu islands, show that even in this area individual rights over land can become very clearly defined when ground for cultivation is scarce, but that the introduction of a rent-paying system and the right to sell or lease land is quite unnecessary to secure this end.

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Before planting the ground-nuts,[1] the straw of the millet is burnt in the dry weather in October (*ukuoce mpimbili*) and the soil hoed very lightly. When the nuts are ripe the following year (May–June), the whole plant is pulled up and the soil left fallow till September when the third-year crop of millet, known as *nkungwila*, is planted in the dry weather before the rains (*ukupamina*). The people only expect to get half as much grain from their third-year gardens as from their first, but they need the extra grain, and the crop ripens more quickly than the main sowing, as it has been planted earlier.

This *nkungwila* crop is of interest as an example of a change in cultivation, possibly due to contact between one African people and another, before the coming of the white man. Two old men told me that 'at the time of the birth of my first child', i.e. thirty or forty years ago, the *ififwani* gardens used to be abandoned after the ground-nut crop had been reaped, and the owner merely came back to dig up the self-propagated nuts (*shyamakoka*) the succeeding year. The Bemba seem to have learnt from the Lungu and other tribes to the west, that it is possible to get a second crop of millet from the one garden, and now this custom is almost invariably followed. 'Hunger taught us' is the expression usually used.[2]

In the fourth year the soil of the *icifwani* is thoroughly dug up by being raised into mounds. In this year a variety of alternatives may be followed. The most usual is to plant beans or some other legume crop, and then to allow the soil to revert to bush. But if the soil is good the Bemba will follow the legume with Kaffir corn, and perhaps after that with sweet potatoes, which are believed to grow anywhere and to require no attention. This makes a sequence of six years, i.e. millet; ground-nuts; millet; beans alone or with sweet potatoes; Kaffir-corn; sweet potatoes, and gives the alternation of grain and legume three times. The *nkungwila* millet may also be followed by Kaffir corn and then by beans—a sequence I saw practised near Kasama.

The five- and six-year sequences used on good soils show that the Bemba are perfectly capable of using their environment to its best advantage when they have the opportunity to do so, and

[1] Ground-beans are occasionally planted instead of ground-nuts in suitable soil, but no other legume to my knowledge.

[2] *Nsala yatufunda.*

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241 rubble of the walls and digging it into the ground till it is soft. The following year the house-site (a rough circle of about fifteen feet in diameter) is hoed over and maize and pumpkins sown on it, as long as the soil remains fertile, after which tobacco or sweet potatoes take its place. This intensive use of old village-sites is likely to have increased importance in urban areas where the villages tend to shift very little. For instance, round Kasama the villages tend to move a quarter of a mile or so from one site to the other—and they make up for want of new land by growing maize, pumpkins, and tobacco—all plants needing rich soil—in ground where their old houses have rotted. The size of the maize plants grown on these *ifitantala* looks as though the increased use of this old practice would be a very successful one as long as the people do not want to build permanent brick houses and thus rob themselves of the use of this refuse soil.[1]

The map in the Appendix shows how the village Kampamba shifted from one site to another contiguous one and continued to cultivate its old house-sites, and the example given below will illustrate the use of the *ifitantala* more clearly.

241 *Mound cultivation in a modern village.* I give the following description of mound cultivation in a particular village for several reasons. First, it happens to show clearly the variations in the soil often found between the different strips round one village, and hence the degree of experimentation that is necessary when cultivating the village beds. Secondly, it shows the degree of individual variation in efficiency that exists, and this is specially marked in a modern village of the type described. Thirdly, in this village the people were actually making an effort to adopt fixed cultivation, and their methods of adaptation are of interest in that respect.

Kungu Village, near the Government Station at Kasama (visited March 1934), had remained fixed in the same spot for ten years, i.e. twice as long as the average Bemba village. Natives admitted that much of the garden soil was bad, but declared they did not want to leave the present site because it lay along a good bicycle path to Kasama, three miles off, where twenty-two out of the twenty-eight taxable males in the village were at work, and where it was possible to find a sale for vegetables and milk to

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[1] There are of course other reasons in favour of the brick house—a raised standard of living, &c.

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Europeans,[1] and beer to Africans resident in the town.[2] The houses had, therefore, been rebuilt twice since the founding of the village in 1924, but one site was only a hundred yards or so from the other. A third re-building was being planned during my visit on a site also in the near vicinity. Hence it is likely that this village may remain fixed for a period of twelve years, instead of the usual four or five.

The soil round this village varied tremendously. Some of the cultivators were gardening on a strip of light, sandy soil covered with scrub, and of these nine failed completely, even though four could probably have produced better results by hoeing more thoroughly. In a series of newer gardens, thirty-three gardeners were cultivating a different type of soil round the present village. Of these thirty-three, eighteen had made successful gardens—twelve on good soil, four on bad ground enriched through village refuse, and two because the owners, two elderly widows, 'had hoed so much that they managed to get food out of sand'. Ten gardeners had failed, seven through the poverty of the soil, two through not weeding sufficiently, and one because old potato runners had remained in the soil and were 'stealing the food of the maize'. Twenty-six other gardens had been made on better soil some distance away near the river-bed, and here the proportion of success was much higher. Thirteen of these gardens were on black loamy soil, and eight on the rich black mud of the river bank; two on a streak of clay; one on sand and two on the edge of an old village site. Of these twenty-six gardens, nineteen were successful, six were still being tried, and only one was a failure—said to be due to insufficient hoeing. On the other hand, those gardeners who were growing maize on the deserted house-sites of their village were nearly all successful. This maize was two or three feet higher than that on the surrounding village beds, and only two out of the fifteen disused house-sites were failures, due to want of judgement in sowing the patch too soon before the rubble of the old house had dissolved in the rain. Thus it will be seen that, of the total number of gardens, twenty out of ninety-two, or nearly twenty-two per cent., were unsuccessful, chiefly, in native eyes,

[1] Four inhabitants owned between them fifteen cows, nine sheep, six bulls, and three goats.

[2] The brewing of beer for sale is, though illicit, one of the few means of livelihood open to an elderly single woman, and many widows or deserted wives drift to the villages near the town for this purpose.

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through the poverty of the soil or the wrong choice of crop, but also through bad gardening in some cases.

I do not know whether the rate of failure among these gardens was higher than that of the ordinary Bemba village. In native eyes it was so. Some gardeners definitely explained that they knew that some of the soil was exhausted, but they were continuing to dig there because they wanted to live near the environs of a town. They said that they could only succeed by leaving their village every two or three years and planting the disused house-sites, and their judgement seemed to be confirmed by the splendid crops of maize they had managed to get when cultivating these *ifitantala*. But other natives criticized the gardening of the inhabitants. They pointed out that some householders were using paid labour and that paid gardeners were 'slaves' who could not be trusted to work well. In at least four cases natives were paying men to dig their beds, while they worked in Kasama, one of these being a woman who had invested a large sum of money, acquired through the marriage of her daughter, in cattle and was paying two labourers thirty shillings each to dig her mounds on the proceeds of the sale of the milk.

I noticed myself greater individual differences in gardening efficiency in this and other villages near Kasama than in the bush communities.

In spite of these modern adaptations to urban life, the natives had acquired no new agricultural methods more fitted to a settled life, nor had they been taught any. The manure of cattle was thrown away unused. The village refuse was recognized to make the whole difference to the poor soil of some gardens, but it was never collected and spread. The only successful adaptation made by these natives was their use of the deserted village-sites for cultivation, the latter lying a few hundred yards from each other, with the more limited range of movement found among suburban communities.

As regards the efficiency of cultivation, I noticed in this and other villages near Kasama greater individual differences than in the bush communities. Several young men had planted their mounds so thickly with different crops that each seemed stunted. They laughed and shrugged their shoulders and said: 'We came back from the mines and thought, we are tired, let us rest now! Then we found that the time had passed for planting and so we

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said, "*Yangwe!* Hunger will catch us!" So we planted every seed at once.'

As a contrast to this inefficient cultivation, I found in these communities one or two natives more skilled in Bemba agriculture than any one else in the country. One cultivator, himself an artisan at work in Kasama, taught me more about Bemba agriculture than I learnt from any one else, and had a larger strip of land under cultivation than would have been possible in an ordinary village. He profited from his fellows' constant movement and lack of interest in their gardens. The few men who were paying labour were also making experiments on a more daring scale than would have been usual elsewhere. Lastly, several old women, entirely without support of male relatives, which would rarely have happened in an ordinary village, were hoeing with an energy thought frenzied by their fellows 'because of their hunger'. This individual variation in cultivation is, I think, characteristic of the modern Bemba community. It is not only that an individual household economy is appearing and with it inequalities in food consumption, but also here and there specialist gardeners, trying to make a success of village life instead of going to the mines. For instance, at Mubanga, six miles off, was a community of enterprising cattle-owners who had obtained permission in 1924 to build huts apart in the bush so that their small herds might not damage the crops of their neighbours. These two natives were plainly men of unusual initiative who had acquired knowledge of cattle-keeping during their travels down south, and had realised the money-making possibilities of selling milk to the small white community of Kasama. They were later joined by natives from elsewhere who wanted the chance to settle near Kasama, and the community was finally constituted a village by the chief, who appointed one of his sisters, Mubanga—a disreputable and unpopular old lady—as headwoman. She was joined by individualists of all sorts—those of the old régime and those of the new. Her adjutant, a middle-aged man who came from another village, was so much disliked that he had bought himself three goats in order to get the necessary permission from the Government to live outside the village. Near his small settlement was a native convicted of sorcery by the Hunting ordeal.[1] No one would have him in their village, so he borrowed five pounds from a well-to-do nephew at Ndola,

[1] Cf. p. 345.

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[754] 241 177 bought cattle, and thus managed to acquire permission to 'build alone'. In 1929 a young tailor at work in a store at Kasama, who had spent some years in Southern Rhodesia with some relatives and had there seen maize cultivated on a large scale on a European farm, joined the community. He had saved money and built himself a four-roomed brick house a few yards outside Mubanga, with six huts around it for dependent relatives. He had then invested in a plough, with which he had put a field of about two acres under cultivation, and had planted maize European fashion. Mubanga village was, in fact, composed of a few individuals of unusual enterprise, much ahead of their contemporaries in outlook; two or three malefactors or unpopular persons living as outcasts near the European town under the cloak of the new economic [548] practices; a successful prostitute, who was paying two men to work her garden for her; a more or less floating population of wage-earners; and a nominee of the Paramount Chief, who constantly tried to keep control over the town natives by appointing one of his own relatives to the position of headman or headwoman.

241 To conclude, my description of the Bemba attitude to their food-stuffs showed their entire dependence on one staple crop, millet, which they consider as an absolutely essential food, and which has a special social and ritual value for them. In their agricultural life, millet cultivation is the dominant activity. It absorbs their energies and enthusiasm and its demands are put before that of any other crop. Fortunately its cultivation is simple according to the Bemba method, even if the latter is now unsuitable owing to its complete dependence on male labour. The ground cleared for millet is used with a good deal of skill for the planting of other crops in subsequent years even though these old burnt gardens are no longer used to the full owing to decreased man-power.

In growing his subsidiary crops the Bemba show considerable knowledge of the properties of different crops and the use of soils, especially in their cultivation of the village beds. But here sociological factors often militate against successful agriculture. Historical tradition and the native's attitude to different crops determine their willingness to grow them. Village sites may be chosen and moved for non-economic reasons. Various psychological factors prevent the natives from putting their maximum effort into mound-cultivation, and shortage of labour and the breakdown of the tribal education system have pronounced

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effects. All these reasons prevent the agricultural knowledge of some of the older Bemba from being used with the best results. Some signs of the adoption of a more fixed habitation are seen in the villages round Kasama, where the people have shown considerable shrewdness in the use of their old village sites as a means of prolonging the fertility of the ground, and here modern economic conditions seem to have resulted in the appearance of the specialist gardener, who does better than his fellows in the bush, side by side with a mass of inefficient and indifferent cultivators.

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The Adoption of Fixed Cultivation in Special Environments

An interesting example of the adoption of fixed cultivation in response to special environmental conditions was noted by Mrs. Gore-Browne among the Bisa on Cilubi Island, Lake Bangweolu, in November 1933. Here shortage of land on a small, rather densely populated island, and shortage of trees for the making of burnt gardens had caused a revolution in agricultural methods during a period of 15–30 years. Forest gardens were now cultivated continuously with a year's fallow every fifth year instead of the former shifting cultivation, and the staple crop had been changed. These people formerly grew millet after the Bemba fashion in burnt gardens and planted cassava with it. The history of particular gardens during the last sixteen years showed that cultivators had been able to use their land nine years running in the first instance, sowing millet with the cassava the first two years, then planting a succession of fresh cassava cuttings for three, redigging completely, and repeating the same sequence of cassava and millet in the subsequent four years. The ground was then left fallow for two years and by this time—the twelfth year of occupation—all attempts to grow millet were apparently abandoned and the people adopted a regular sequence of planting cassava, setting cuttings for three years running and following it with a ground-nut crop for the fourth year. After this they allowed the ground to lie fallow for a year, and then restarted the same four-year sequence.

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In this way, the particular gardens visited had been kept in more or less continuous cultivation for a period of sixteen years. Under these conditions the Bisa have had to give up the use of millet as a staple crop entirely. They live upon cassava with a great deal of fish from the lake and a few supplementary foods such as ground-beans and peas grown on a small scale in special gardens made in the alluvial soil near river banks. They only plant millet for beer, and that on a neighbouring island with rich soil, and travel there by canoe two or three times a year

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to sow or harvest their crops, giving tribute to the local chief for the right to use the land. For the rest, as the first step in fixed cultivation in poor soil without manure, they make extensive use of deserted village sites as do the Bemba, and other local systems prescribe carefully the method of use of this valuable ground.

This instance shows that the native is perfectly capable of adopting some sort of fixed cultivation when environmental conditions compel him to do so. I do not know whether such an adaptation would occur among the Bemba with their far greater reliance on millet for their diet and their traditional interest in the crop, but I saw a case of conscious adoption of the Bisa practice by a Bemba village living near their border on a treeless plain on the banks of the Luansenshi River—1933, a year of locust raids. Here, the headman told me, the villagers had decided by common consent to give up their *ifitemene* for the first time in their lives 'because we have used up all the trees and we said "Well! then let us turn into Bisa now"', i.e. live on cassava. Such instances of the purposive adaptation of the customs of a neighbouring tribe, by a people living on their border, show that the hand of custom is not as heavy on the African as is sometimes imagined.

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backwaters nets can be set by one method or another practically throughout the year.

Other methods. The Bemba also fish with hooks (*amaloba*) baited with fish and slung on a rope across a big stream, when the waters are low in August, but I never saw this done. Younger men say this method was introduced by the white people since they know that fish hooks are now only to be obtained at European stores. Older fishermen told me that, on the contrary, this type of fishing was practised from the earliest times, and that the Bemba 'always' knew how to make rough iron hooks for the purpose.

A few fish are said to be caught on the Chambesi flats when the floods are falling by means of plaited screens of grass (*uluangwa*) by which the women cut off small fish from the stream, but, indeed, when the waters are drying up at this season odd fish are caught here and there in all sorts of ways. I have often seen casual passers-by step off a raised pathway through fields flooded to a depth of six inches and catch fish of about ½ lb. to 1 lb. in their hands in the grasses, or else spear them (*ukumela*).

To summarize, it can be said that the Bemba who live near the smaller streams of the district are for the most part unskilled fishermen, and rely on the low waters of dried up rivers, and flooded banks to catch a few fish at certain months of the year, but never get sufficient to dry or trade. They have no organized system of exploiting the resources of the rivers or definite leadership in this activity, but catch whatever they can during the breeding season, or before the fish are full grown.[1] In the regular fishing villages, on the other hand, the activity is almost continuous throughout the year. There are four or five different methods of fishing practised, and the men are universally employed in this pursuit. They value their reputation as skilled fishermen and know a considerable amount about the different types of fish caught. Though there is not sufficient fish caught to permit of regular trading, yet it is quite common for a man to be able to pay his 10*s.* tax by sporadic sales of dried fish.

6. *Fishing rights and ceremonies.* Fishing rights, like the rules of use of land, cannot be considered apart from the peoples' beliefs as to the spiritual ownership of food resources. The produce of

[1] How far the people are destroying their supplies of fish by this means does not yet seem clear. Cf. Report on the fish of Lake Bangweolu by C. K. Ricardo and R. J. Jones, December 1936.

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224 411 [435 23] (*d*) *Spears, bows, dogs, and guns.* The Bemba occasionally hunt in twos and threes with spears and dogs. Trained dogs are very valuable—about 10*s.*—and hard to buy. I never saw hunters go out with dogs, but I know that they are extremely skilful in throwing spears at a distance of about twenty feet, and that they sometimes kill small duiker in this manner. Bows and arrows are carried by very old men only and used to shoot at monkeys raiding gardens. [428] A bow is handed down ceremoniously to a dead man's heir but is not often used in the hunt. It is the ambition of every native to own a muzzle-loading gun, which he can purchase for about 30*s.* and obtain a Government licence to use. Many Bemba still go to the mines for no other purpose than to earn the money for a gun, which seems to promise security and prestige in their old age. However, many of these guns are in fact more deadly to the hunter than to the quarry, since they are rammed with shot, slag iron, and rusty nails till the long-suffering barrels explode. It is unlikely that many buck are killed in this way.

● [177 643] European rifles are owned only by hunters employed by Europeans, or chiefs. The Bemba are said to be skilled trackers and think nothing of spending two or three days in pursuit of game. Game which is killed with a gun is the property of the shooter, to divide as he pleases, after he has given a portion to the nearest headman or chief. There is no special ritual attached to shooting, although the hunter may ask a blessing from the headman if he wishes, and in any case calls on his *imipashi* and carries magic charms.

224 463 (*e*) *Elephant hunters.* The Bemba elephant hunters were typical magician-specialists (*ifibinda*), i.e. they possessed both skill and the magic necessary to give them success. Elephants were killed formerly by the aid of weighted spears of specially heavy make by hunters known as *bashimunini*, with dogs and spears and large crowds of beaters by another type of hunter known as *bakalongwe*, or with guns traded from the Arabs by those called *Bafundi*. Nowadays elephant hunters only work for the Government or for certain big chiefs with special permission. The ordinary native is allowed to kill an elephant only when it is actually raiding his garden.

[422] All elephant hunters were under the direct control of the chief in the old days, and he had the monopoly of the ivory so obtained. The chief summoned the hunters, but they were led by the *icibinda*.

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PART VI

ORGANIZING THE WORK

CHAPTER XVII

RELIGION AND MAGIC IN ECONOMIC LIFE

The Nature of Economic Ritual.

THE fundamental Bemba beliefs in the powers of their ancestral spirits have already been referred to constantly, whether in relation to their political organization, their system of land tenure, or their general attitude towards the production and collection of food. But the ritual of their ancestor worship remains to be outlined, and in particular the part it plays in their whole economic life. The Bemba pray, or offer sacrifices, at all the chief events of the agricultural year such as tree-cutting, sowing, and harvest. Formerly this ceremonial seems to have been unusually rich and complex, especially that performed at the Paramount Chief's court. Nowadays the rites are carried out with diminishing ceremony, by fewer people, and often with great secrecy, owing to severe discouragement from some of the missionaries in the area. But the beliefs associated with these rites still seemed to me to dominate the people's thoughts and to affect their agricultural efforts, while the ceremonies themselves, even when temporarily abandoned, were often resumed at times of ill luck or catastrophe. They had still to be reckoned as one of the most important sanctions of the chief's authority, and were hence unfailingly performed at the latter's court.

For all these reasons it is important for our special purpose to estimate the function of these magico-religious practices in Bemba economic life and, consequently, the effect which their lapse is likely to have on the production of food in the territory as a whole. In a tribe living at this particular level of development it is chiefly human energy and purpose which makes the difference between failure and success, and ritual has often been described as one of the chief means by which the courage and industry of a primitive people is kept at its height. This pragmatic aspect of magic and religion was first emphasized by Malinowski in his analysis of

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Mwamba, the second greatest Bemba chief but one, who lives about ten miles from the white centre of Kasama, where his young men go to work. Here I also saw an *ukutema* rite, but only the old men participated. The boys looked derisively on while the chief made obeisance before his ancestors' shrines, and they only joined the subsequent tree-cutting reluctantly because they were interested by my presence and wanted to have the right to drink the beer provided for the workers on their return. These were youths who despised agriculture as a pursuit fit only for the old, and laughed at everything commonly known as 'the things of the past' (*ifintu fya kale.*) Their conduct distressed the old men exceedingly, and the comments passed with shrugs and in asides were instructive. They showed the complete association in the Bemba mind between the chief's political authority and his power of blessing. If Mwamba had been a 'great chief', the argument ran, he would have been able to control his men. That he was not showed that the spirits did not favour him and that the land had gone 'hard'. It was hardly likely that the royal garden would prosper, therefore, or, of course, the rest of the *icalo*. Elsewhere individuals still seemed to pray to the *imipashi* before tree-cutting, although some Roman Catholics have begun to cross themselves instead, or as well, but the integrating function of the chief's or headman's ceremony is evidently very much decreased.

(*b*) *Firing the gardens.* The firing of the piled branches, the next act of the economic year, is also ritualized, but the ceremonial is not public in any sense, either at the capital or in an ordinary village, and most commoners were unable to give me an account of what happened at the firing of the chief's gardens. In this instance they wait for the *mfumu's* signal to fire their gardens, but not for news of the ceremony performed then. The rite depends on the Bemba belief in the danger of contaminated fire, that is to say, fire that has been touched by any one ceremonially impure. If such fire is considered harmful to the life of a young child, or a chief, and a bar to any approach to the *imipashi*, it is not unnatural that the people should believe it necessary to light their branch piles with new fire, that is to say, made with fire-sticks or matches. A commoner whom I saw fire his gardens, brought matches, lit a torch of grass, spat into the air, and cried out, "Now you fire burn well, and let us go in peace."[1] A headman should purify himself

[1] *We mulilo ulepyafye cisuma! Tuende no mutende!*

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769 796 value'. But in Bemba society the ritual stress on the legal and political prerogatives of the chief is also prominent at the first-fruits ceremonies, and the harvest, as well as the tree-cutting, can be made the occasion of a big display of the Paramount's power.

(*f*) *Rain ritual.* Prayers for rain are rarely necessary in this area as the supply is usually ample, but when they occur the Citimukulu is alone responsible. I never heard of a territorial chief or a headman praying for rain, or an *yanga* asked to provide it by magic. The only means of obtaining rain is apparently to send an ox to the chiefs' burial grove in charge of one of the royal undertakers, and the ShiMwalule there sacrifices the beast at the shrine in the grove. One such sacrifice was apparently performed in 1930.

771 182 To conclude, the magico-religious rites of the Bemba were certainly an integral part of their whole economic system. The ceremonies gave an impetus to their ordinary agricultural activities, and enabled the chief to organize their efforts more effectively, and thus to support the whole machinery of tribal government. The performance of the ritual constantly emphasized the supernatural powers of the chief, both in his own person and by his right of access to the tribal spirits. On this deeply-seated belief in the attributes of their *mfumu*, economic incentives and the use of land ultimately depended. It is this faith which has been weakened nowadays with pronounced effects on the whole morale of the tribe, as far as agriculture is concerned. How far Christian ritual has taken the place of the old agricultural ceremonies I do not know. I have seen natives cross themselves before tree-cutting and sowing, and I believe that some missions hold church services for the blessing of the seeds, but it will remain a fact that the old Bemba ceremonial of ancestor worship put the control of the religious rites into the hands of the political and administrative authority of the tribe, while those of the Christian churches do not, and cannot, do the same, since no big chiefs have yet accepted Christianity.

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present tendency of building smaller and smaller settlements lessens the labour force in this way.

The economic leadership in the village, in so far as it exists, is in the hands of the headman. He directs joint enterprises, decides when the village should be moved, and chooses the new site in co-operation with the other elders. He is in charge of the communal rites, settles minor disputes between the villagers, and represents his people at the chief's court or the District Commissioner's office. He is responsible for the collecting of tribute, providing *umulasa* labour, and for any administrative duties the Government may charge him with, such as the catching of tax defaulters, &c. But there is no doubt that most of the Bemba headman's authority is derived from his position as head of a kinship group, and that he is respected as the grandfather, father-in-law, or maternal uncle of most of the inhabitants, as well as by virtue of his political status (cf. Chap. VII). Thus the power of a headman of an old-fashioned type of community, and in particular those of the *bakabilo*, is in striking contrast to the wavering authority exerted by those ruling over a modern village not definitely composed on kinship lines. For instance, Citikafula, one of Citimukulu's chief *bakabilo*, was headman of a village composed as follows:[1] 25 men, of whom 14 were close personal relatives of the headman (2 brothers, 4 sons, 3 grandsons, 4 maternal nephews, 1 cross-cousin), while the remaining members of the community had come from other villages to marry women at Citikafula's. There were 35 women, of whom 27 were near relatives of the headman (3 wives, 7 daughters, 6 granddaughters, 6 sisters, 3 maternal nieces, 1 grandmother, and 1 mother-in-law). Hence nearly 75 per cent. of the men and women were members of the headman's own lineage group. In such a village he was able to get large gardens made for him by his younger relatives, strode about the settlement scolding householders with untidy huts, and organized the garden work by constant criticism and encouragement. Whereas Bwembya, a man of equal personality and a member of the royal clan, was headman of a village four miles from Kasama, that is to say, almost within a white township. His community was composed as follows: 52 men, of whom 5 were close relatives only (i.e. father, 1 brother, 1 maternal nephew, 1 brother-in-law, and 1 grandson), and 108 women, of whom 8 were near relatives (1 daughter, 2

[1] Using the kinship terms in their classificatory sense.

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621 grand-daughters, 2 sisters, 2 maternal nieces, and 1 sister-in-law);
624 8 per cent. of the inhabitants only were thus closely related to the
184 headman, and 10 men were actually members of quite different tribes.[1] Thirty out of the 52 men had joined the village with the express purpose of finding work with the Europeans at Kasama and not on kinship grounds at all. In a community of this type Bwembya evidently found it impossible to control the activities of his people, and they gave him little economic help in spite of his royal rank. It is often stated that young men lose respect for tribal [177] authorities after working in the mines, and this is largely true, but it must also be borne in mind that the tribal authorities are in charge of groups of quite different composition from those of old days, and they are asked to perform different functions of leadership.

241 (c) *The chief's leadership in economic enterprises.* There are
622 two aspects of the chief's functions as an organizer of labour. In the first place, there are a number of activities he actually initiates and co-ordinates, and in the second, his direction of his own labour force and his accumulation of stores in the capital, sets the pace for agricultural enterprise and forms the basis of the whole economic system of the tribe.

We have seen that the chief actually sets the time for the firing of the gardens, and that the performance of economic rites still to some extent gives the signal for tree-cutting and sowing. The knowledge that big gardens are being made at the capital, acts, as I tried to show, as a stimulus to the undertaking of further work.[2]

Besides, it is difficult to realize, without living at the capital for some time, the extent to which the *mfumu* directs agricultural enterprises by advising or criticizing both the members of his own big village and those of his *icalo*. Ultimately chiefs want food produced in their district, because they then get plenty of tribute. They express this fact quite frankly. A severe shortage also, as I indicated, reflects on their supernatural powers, makes people begin to grumble, and even in time threaten to leave.[3] From all points of view, therefore, it is to the chief's advantage that the people should cultivate efficiently. Their knowledge of cultivating processes, soil selection, and the best moment for planting is also

[1] Note the proportion of men to women in these villages: i.e. 25:35 and 52:108 respectively.

[2] Cf. p. 371.

[3] e.g. the charges made all over the country against Citimukulu during the recent locust epidemic for failure to perform his ritual duties properly.

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as an abstract sequence of names of which certain have an emotional significance as being a period containing a birthday or Christmas, but the Bemba child is delighted with the appearance of each new crescent and lives a more exciting life during the full moon. He only gradually learns at about 9 or 10 that certain of these moons coincide with particular economic tasks, and later still, as an adult, he is able to recite all the moons in order and to discourse wisely on the whole sequence of the calendar.

Before the coming of the white man, the Bemba had apparently no smaller subdivision of the month than the day. They have now completely adopted the English week, even in remote spots of the country where no one is working for a European. Every native keeps the Christian Sunday, known as the 'day of God', *nshiku ya Mulungu*, from which term the week itself is known as *Mulungu*, the word for God, and the days called the first, second, third, fourth, &c. (*pali cimo*, *pali cibili*, &c.). The conception of the week has been incorporated in Bemba economic life since it coincides with an adoption of the European rhythm of work and system of payment, and the acceptance for the first time of a time interval which is also a period of work. Wage-earners calculate their weeks of service, and chiefs who formerly called up tribute labourers when they were required now state their dues in precise terms, as for instance three days a week.

The Bemba word for night is *ubushiku*, and for day *akasuba*. In any one day the time is divided into three. Dawn is a fixed event (*bwaca*), and the period from dawn till midday is known as *ulucelo*. Midday, from 11 till about 3 o'clock, is called *akasuba*, the ordinary word for sun, and the period from 3 to 6, i.e. the time of sunset, is known as *icungulo*. Thus a man who wants to make an appointment with a friend does so to the nearest two or three hours, by telling him to come in the morning, at midday, or in the evening, and when acting as a witness at a legal court can place events in this manner, usually giving additional precision to his statement by raising his arm to point to the exact position of the sun in the sky at the time referred to, e.g. at 11 or 3, and adding, 'The sun was like this' (*kasubefi*).

It is hardly ever necessary to fix time in the night, but the natives speak of 'the middle of the night' (*pakati ka bushiku*) and will also reckon time by the number of turns they have made in their sleep, since these people apparently wake more or less regu-

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3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
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J. M. Robins

MAP SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF CHISUNGU, OR CHISUNGU-LIKE CEREMONIES IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Territorial boundaries are marked thus: · — · — · —

Tribes practising rites called Chisungu are underlined.

[LP. 231, p. 24 is blank]

3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
FQ5 Bemba FQ5

The Interpretation of the Ceremony

Social isolation was also marked by abstention from the usual habits of life. The girls wore old and shabby cloths tied round their waists. They were three times rebuked for tying their cloths above their breasts in the ordinary fashion of Bemba women. Their food was cooked on a separate fire. They were not allowed to wash or shave. This isolation was shared to some extent by all the actors of the chisungu. For instance, the men of the community were kept away from the important ceremonial and were rebuked for passing near the spot where the pottery emblems were made. They consistently looked the other way when the procession of women went through the village, and stood with lowered eyes when the girls were brought from the ceremony of whitening. The mothers of the girls and the *nacimbusa* should have shared the isolation of the candidates by keeping washing and shaving taboos, but airily explained their lapse by saying that they were 'nearly Christians'.

Such symbolic acts of separation occur in other forms of Bemba ritual when a change of social role has taken place, such as in the marriage ceremony proper or the rite of installation of a chief. But the characteristic element here is the number of stages the girl has to pass, and also the emphasis on the difficulty, not only of the new life, but of the tests of maturity the girl has to pass. The candidates were 'given their gardens' or made free to garden on their own. Their new fire was ritually lit and they were made free to touch the fireplace, to cook food, and to offer it to other women in the rite of the *namushimwa*. They were twice made free to eat food, once after the lighting of the *namushimwa* fire, and once by the touching of their lips with porridge and with the livers of the ritually cooked chickens on the last night of the ceremony. They were bathed, shaved, dressed in new clothes and finally brought out to receive the congratulations of the community.

These are rites of role assumption, but is there not also an element of test, or actually of ordeal, in the magic sense of the word? It is difficult to say whether the symbolic acts of separation and rejoining the community are thought to cause social maturation and can thus be ranked as magic of growth; or whether they are signs of the readiness of the candidate for such changes, or signs

601 [605] sister's child or the mother's brother's child. Cross-cousin marriage is, as has been said, the preferential marriage, and joking relationships exist between a man and his female cross-cousins on either side.

In the first ascending generation, a man uses the term *tata* for his own father, his father's brothers, real and classificatory, and the husband of a woman whom he calls mother. He uses the term *mayo* for his own mother and her sisters, real or classificatory. He distinguishes his father's sister by a special term, *mayo senge*, from his mother's sisters and the mother's brother by a separate term, *yama*, from his father's brother. In the first descending generation, there is a common term, *mwana*, used for both sexes, but a man calls the children of his sister by a special term, *mwipwa*, and a woman calls the children of her brother either *mwipwa* or *mwana senge*.

In the second ascending generation there is a common term, *shikulu*, for the paternal and maternal grandfathers, real or classificatory, and *mama* for grandmother. In the second ascending generation the same term, *mweshikulu*, is used for boys and girls, whether the children of daughters or the children of sons. The common term, *bukwe*, is used for spouses and members of the *lupwa*, although there is a special term for sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, *shifyala* or *najyala*. These terms are used reciprocally.

CHANGES IN MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY DUE TO EUROPEAN INFLUENCE

797 ●177 Changes in marriage and the family have resulted both from the teaching of Christian missions and also because of the absences of adult males, who leave home to earn the means wherewith to pay tax and buy European goods. Missionary teaching has, as in other areas, been directed against the practice of polygyny and divorce. Missionaries have also opposed the practice of giving young girls to their husbands before puberty. They have endeavoured also to eradicate the magical attitudes towards sex and fire, described in a later section - attitudes which form one of the sanctions of marriage morality. They have been largely successful in their attempt to prevent the celebration of girls' initiation ceremonies (*cisungu*

797 177 585 Native marriage is recognised in this area. The British South Africa Company recognised the Native Customary Law from the start and administered it through district magistrates' courts with the aid of Bemba assessors. Simultaneously the Missions instituted various Christian ceremonials in which a restricted(1) form of traditional marriage ceremony was carried out With the institution in 1929 of Native Courts of Law, all civil actions arising out of marriage were referable to them and not to a European Magistrate. An early missionary claim to regulate marriages was quashed in 1934. Native marriages may now be registered.

LABOUR MIGRATION

167 464 Although it is generally recognized that labour migration has been an

(1) Without initiation rites and full ceremonial, e.g. post-initiation intercourse.

231 encouraged and there are now a few herds in the valley. Horses and mules are lacking. The donkey ridden by Gamitto when he made his entry in 1830 was the first of the species to be seen in the country.(1) The villagers keep poultry and some small stock, mainly goats and sheep.

FISHING

226 Fish abound in the Luapula, the riverside lagoons and Lakes Mweru and Mofwe. Livingstone collected the vernacular names of thirty-nine species caught in Lake Mweru.(2) Some fishing goes on all the year round but the season, when the men move to the fishing camps on the river islands, extends from September to January. In the shallow marshland pools the fish are speared while laying their eggs. In flowing water they are trapped in conical wickerwork baskets set in rocky falls or in the openings in a weir.(3) On Lake Mweru they are caught from canoes with hook and line. On the Luapula the people go out in their dugouts at night and drive the fish into seine-nets (*ubukonde*) by hitting the surface of the water with wooden discs attached to poles.(4) Large-scale fishing is done with drag-nets (*umukwau*) which require several men to pull them. Formerly nets were made by men from barkcloth cord. Nowadays nylon and cotton nets are used. Vegetable poisons and stupefacients, now banned, were employed in the past.

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HUNTING

223 Hunting and fowling are spare-time activities. Elephants and buffa-
224 loes, which in Livingstone's time used to be chased into the Mofwe mudflats during the rainy season and killed in great numbers,(5) are no longer found in Kazembe's country though some still remain on the Belgian Congo side.
[411] Large herds of lechwe antelope roam the swamp country beyond the inhabited belt. Fire-arms have displaced the traditional weapons.

DIET

251 The basic foodstuffs are cassava(6) and fish. Game, poultry, fruit and wild bees' honey, supplement the diet. Cassava is soaked in water,
252 peeled and sun-dried for storing. The root, after being pounded and ground
262 on a stone, is made into porridge and flavoured with groundnuts or other relish. Sweet cassava is eaten roasted.(7) Fish is consumed fresh or
273 dried, game fresh or smoked. Fish, when dried in the sun or over a fire, will keep for three months. Water-lily roots, on which, according to tradition, the aboriginal pygmies fed, are considered a delicacy. Native-made alcoholic beverages were millet beer(8) (still made), *Borassus* palm wine, mead(9) and a spirit distilled from maize.(10) Oil is expressed from palm
276 fruit(11) and from groundnuts and vinegar used to be made from bananas.(12) Tobacco is taken as snuff and smoked in pipes.(13) *Bhang* (hemp), was

(1) Burton, op.cit., p.252.
(2) Livingstone, op.cit., p.245.
(3) Brelsford, 2, 1947, pp.70, 71.
(4) Holmes, 1925, p.26.
(5) Livingstone, op.cit., pp.248, 276, 299.
(6) Burton, op.cit., p.40.
(7) ibid., p.101.
(8) ibid., p.43.
(9) Gamitto, II, p.26; Valdez, II, p.246.
(10) Bowdich, p.91.
(11) Livingstone, op.cit., pp.243, 278.
(12) ibid, p.272.
(13) ibid., p.251; Gamitto, I, p.401.

pants from the contemplation of their loss he makes jokes at the expense of the dead man and behaves in a fashion which in other circumstances would be considered outrageous and would not be tolerated. 764

Kazembes considered themselves as potentially immortal; thus the death of a Kazembe was attributed to neglect of magical precautions against witchcraft.(1) According to Pinto, slaves and wives of a dead Kazembe were sacrificed and a ten-day period of authorized licence followed during which robberies were allowed.(2) 754 643 782

It was believed that the living and the dead could communicate. Life after death resembled that led while alive.(3) 775

RELIGIOUS AND MAGICAL BELIEFS AND RITUAL

The concept of the high-god Lesa is common to the Bemba-speaking peoples. *Lesa*, the creator, is regarded rather as a nature force than a personal deity and is not the object of an organised cult. He manifests himself in thunder, lightning, and the rainbow and can kill by lightning or epidemics, but generally interferes little. 776

The *ngulu*, nature spirits residing in animals, trees, stones, hills, caves, ponds, waterfalls, can bring good weather and crops and are prayed to in an emergency. This cult is of non-Lunda origin and has probably come from the Chishinga, Lungu and Bemba country. Most of the dwelling-places of these spirits are found on the escarpment hills and on the plateau. The *mfumu ya mipashi* (chiefs of spirits), which can enter and possess people making them dance, are local deities whose beneficient activity is confined to the village or district. [177]

When the general well-being of the community was concerned the spirits of dead Kazembes, *masamos*, were consulted and presented with offerings of cassava, beer and goats. Kazembes were buried at a place north-east of the old capital with which it was connected by a broad pathway(4) still discernible. Each had a shrine which was tended by a guardian-priest, *mwine masamo*,(5) whose office was hereditary. These keepers of the royal graves sought the advice of the oracle when war was contemplated and invoked the assistance of the spirits.(6) The River Lualaba, in which Kazembe the founder of the dynasty rests, was held in veneration. Processions went there annually at harvesting time. It is said that Keleka was the first Kazembe who failed to lead the procession in person, and the famine and smallpox epidemic which later occurred were attributed to his negligence.(7) The Kazembe is said to have been the highest religious authority.(8) 769 643 764 778 731

Carved wooden figures representing dead ancestors (*nkisi*) were kept in special huts and received offerings of beer, cassava, flour, hemp and tobacco.(9) Kazembe had several such figures, some named after dead chiefs, which were carried before the army in battle.(10) 778 532 769

(1) Valdez, II, p.242.
(2) Burton, p.128.
(3) Valdez, op.cit., p.243.
(4) Valdez, II, p.231.
(5) Burton, p.103.
(6) Valdez, op.cit., p.248.
(7) Valdez, II, p.257.
(8) ibid., p.243.
(9) Livingstone, I, p.353.
(10) ibid.

5:Slaski E-4 (no date) 1950 FQ5 Bemba FQ5
Lunpula Peoples

An equally elaborate ritual is practised in connection with salt-making (see above p.85). 317

Certain beliefs and doctrines are of recent origin. The Watch Tower movement (*Ba Chitawala*) which owes its origin to "the incidence of western culture on traditional beliefs, customs and sanctions",(1) is a revivalist movement teaching that before the second coming of Christ Lake Mweru will boil and the Europeans from the district will be thrown into it. The disciples group themselves into separate wards or found their own villages. They cultivate in common and share the produce of their work. The movement has strong political implications, and its adherents refuse to pay tax on the grounds that the Government is resisting the will of God. The Watch Tower flourished openly before the counter-measures applied after the Copperbelt disturbances of 1935. 177● 668 795

The *banucapi* movement(2) of witchfinders at one time also gained ground in the valley. It probably originated in the neighbourhood of Lake Nyasa and, like the Watch Tower, incorporates elements of Christian doctrine. 177 795

Greatly feared are the *Banyama* - natives employed by or having contacts with Europeans - who are believed to murder their own countrymen to satisfy white blood-drinkers.

There are six mission stations at present in Kazembe's Kingdom. The Plymouth Brethren have three (at Kawama, Mubende and Johnston Falls), the White Fathers two (at Lufubu and Nsakaluba), and the London Missionary Society one (at Mbereshi). On the Belgian Congo side there is a mission at Kasenga and another at Chisambo. 797

(1) Quick, 1940, pp.216-21.

(2) Richards, 1935.

7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

622 643 782 But here again ritual is one of the big integrating forces. The Citimukulu can initiate a series of sacrifices (*ulupepo lukalamba*), which start at his relic houses and spread to all the shrines throughout the land. The *bakabilo* are sent from Lubemba to bury any of the bigger territorial chiefs who die in their distant *ifyalo* and to install the new heir. The paramount prays for rain on the rare occasions when it is required, on behalf of the whole tribe. Thus for ritual purposes, in spite of the quarrels and jealousies between different lines of the royal family, the whole Bemba country can be said to act as a whole and to be conscious of its unity. If the paramount chief were to turn Christian before the political institutions of this tribe have been considerably adapted, tribal cohesion would, I think, be very much weakened, whether temporarily or permanently.

VII. Post-European Changes

177 642 643 The advent of British rule in Northern Rhodesia changed at once the position of the Bemba chief and his political machinery, and it continues to do so in an increasing variety of ways. Some of these changes are due to the actual introduction of new authorities into the area—whether Government officials, missionaries, or other Europeans—who have either replaced the old Bemba officials, divided the spheres of authority with them, or introduced entirely new conceptions of the functions of government itself. Others seem to be mainly the result of changed economic conditions, particularly the introduction of money, the institution of wage labour, and the provision of opportunities for money-making in industrial undertakings outside the territory. Such factors, over which the Administration has often little direct control, have inevitably affected the position of the Bemba chief. They have altered the people's conception of authority, destroyed the whole basis of labour on which the powers of the chief depended, and the old correlation between political authority, economic privilege, and military strength.

177 The total effects of white domination on the Bemba political organization have not yet proceeded to their full length, but it will be well to indicate some of the changes produced by the introduction of a new machinery of government, e.g. the alteration in the balance of the old tribal system, and the resultant weakening of the personal relationship between subject and chief upon which

7: Richards E-5 (1930-1934) 1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

the whole structure of authority depended. To do so, it will be simplest to try to indicate the position when the Europeans first took over the administration of the country, and to compare this with the situation produced by the introduction of a modified system of Indirect Rule in 1929.

(*a*) *New Authorities Introduced.* In 1900 north-eastern Rhodesia was placed under the control of the British South Africa Company by an Order-in-Council after its officials had established posts in or near the Bemba country at Kasama, the present administrative centre of the northern province of Northern Rhodesia, in 1899 and at Mirongo, near the present Chinsali, in 1896. This administration continued until 1924, when the Colonial Office assumed control. To the Bemba, considered a particularly fierce and warlike tribe before the arrival of the white man, the superior force of the new administration must have been immediately apparent. The officials of the British South Africa Company were better armed. They at once intervened in a case of disputed succession over the Mwambaship which had then fallen vacant, and appointed their own nominee instead of his maternal uncle, who was endeavouring to take the title by force. One by one the functions of the old chiefs were taken over by the new authorities. New courts of law were introduced, and though some Native customary law was administered by the white officials, yet here as elsewhere customs considered 'repugnant to natural justice and morality' were prohibited, this category was such a large one[1] that to the natives it must have seemed like the introduction of a new code. Certain totally new offences were also created, e.g. the killing of elephants and a number of other forms of game, the digging of game-pits, and the use of primitive iron-smelteries. The penalties for legal offences were changed too. For mutilation at the hands of the chief, enslavement, and compensation paid to the injured party was substituted imprisonment, beating, fines paid to the Government, and the death sentence. New demands on natives' goods and services were also made, such as the hut-tax of 3*s.* 6*d.*, afterwards changed to a poll-tax, which now stands at 7*s.* 6*d.*, and the enrolment of natives as carriers, road-builders, &c., in Government pay. The B.S.A. administration recognized the Bemba chiefs and in 1916 defined their authority more

[1] e.g. accusations of witchcraft, murders for ritual purposes, the use of the ordeal in determining guilt, &c.

7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

177 642 exactly,[1] but they were used in the main as executive officials and shorn of most of their authority and their privileges, such as the owning of slaves, the possession of arms, the right of mutilation, the power of administering the poison test, and the collection of the ivory tusks.

177 641 The sanctions for the power of the new administration were, in native eyes I think, its military strength and the fact that it had overcome the once powerful Bemba chiefs, and later, as new economic values were acquired, its apparently endless wealth.[2] But when talking with elder natives one is aware how largely the pattern of fear and personal allegiance accorded to the old chiefs was transferred with little modification to the new authorities. The same terms are used for both: there is the same assumption that the tax, game-laws, and even the paid employment of natives are all dues demanded by the Government for its own aggrandisement, as was the tribute of the chiefs in the old days.[3] There is much the same belief in the ruler's complete omnipotence, and a similar expectation of sudden arbitrary action, even as I noticed, when the most good-natured and reasonable officials appeared to be concerned. It is no exaggeration to state that each Government station is in effect a native capital or *umusumba*. Each has its district officer, an authority like the chief with a following to whom allegiance may mean advance, and who is regarded with mingled fear and loyalty. Each has its force of messengers and police, employs its own labour.

177 797 The missionary bodies in the country must also be regarded as new authorities set up in the tribe. The White Fathers entered the Bemba country just ahead of the B.S.A. administration and set up their first post near Kasama, in the heart of the Bemba country. They can still be said to dominate this central district, although the Church of Scotland Mission and the London Missionary Society also operate elsewhere. Each different mission station must also be regarded as an *umusumba*. Many

[1] cf. Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the financial and economic position of Northern Rhodesia (1938), p. 179.

[2] Older natives seemed to me to comment most on the ferocity of the Government officials (*ubukali*), and the younger to speak of the wealth of the Administration.

[3] It is common for old men and women to refer to their sons who have either been recruited or else gone voluntarily to the mines as having been 'seized by the Government', and to speak of opportunities arranged for the sale of their grain as having their food 'seized' by the native commissioner.

7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

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are big establishments, with enormous and impressive cathedrals. They own and cultivate ground, attract a following, have villages on their estates regarded as 'mission people,' just as the *bena musumba* are considered to be the personal following of a chief. Each society, again, has introduced what is, in native eyes, its own new code of laws, often differing from those of the Government and those of the chiefs, e.g. most missions prohibit polygamy, some divorce, others beer-drinking, dancing, or religious ceremonial of different kinds. In native eyes at present there are certain well-known rules binding on the Christian members of the community, sometimes even bringing them into conflict with the other authorities of the society, the district official and the chief, and a new category of offence known as *fya busenshi* ('things of heathendom'), or *fya kale* ('things of the past') believed to be strongly condemned.[1]

Besides their own villagers, the missionary societies exert authority over Christians scattered in nearly every community in the territory, and their grip over these distant 'subjects' must in some cases be just as strong as those of the chiefs of old days. At the Roman Catholic missions at any rate, each baby of Christian parents is registered and summoned at the right time for instruction, however far away he or she lives. Each village is constantly visited by travelling native teachers and evangelists, and by the white missionaries themselves.

The sanctions of the missionaries' authority are many. On the positive side, their teaching and their way of living command a new allegiance and a new opportunity for advance and their personalities very often inspire admiration, affection, and personal loyalty. On the negative side, there is the introduction of a new supernatural sanction quite as powerful as those that supported the chief's authority,[2] and the threat to withdraw the Christian members of a community in which the Christian law is being flouted by a headman or prominent member. This acts as a powerful deterrent in the case of many Roman Catholic villages,

[1] This last is, of course, an injustice to the modern missionary, who is often one of the first to try to encourage interest in and respect for native custom.

[2] The fear of hel-fire, and, in the case of the older and less educated natives, the fear of curses seriously believed to be uttered by missionaries, evidently on the strength of some such statement as 'God will punish you if you behave like that'—such a belief being almost inevitable in an area where chiefs were thought to have power to curse.

7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

since the break-up of the whole settlement may become inevitable in such circumstances.

There are no other organized bodies of Europeans in this area —no big bodies of farmers or settlers, for instance. But it may be said that all Europeans are in a sense in a position of authority. They all have the sanction of wealth and the power of employing a following. All have the high social status that enables them to talk to a chief as an equal, or more usually as an inferior, and all are believed by the natives to be backed, whether right or wrong, by the administrative officers of the district however unjustifiably.

Besides these new authorities introduced into the political arena, the power of the Bemba chief is inevitably reduced by his economic position, which must have grown increasingly bad since the first days of European occupation. The Bemba rulers were never rich compared to a number of African potentates. Theirs is a poor country. They possess no cattle which could be converted to money under modern conditions; the ivory of their country no longer belongs to them, nor their mineral rights. Land has no financial value as yet, and the salaries given to chiefs have always been low compared to the income, say, of the paramount chief of the Barotse.[1] Added to this, the service on which the Bemba chiefs depended is cut down by half or more by the absence of men at the mines, and what remains is often given unwillingly. These chiefs never apparently exacted court fines as a regular thing, after the fashion of the cattle-owning Bantu, and have not yet put a levy on the earnings of men away at the mines, as has been done in some parts of South Africa.

In view of these facts, it may be asked how the power of the *Bena ŋandu* survived at all up till 1929, when a determined effort was made to restore it. Partly because of their closely knit kinship structure, but also, I think, because of the strength of the supernatural beliefs on which their authority was so largely based. These were certainly weakened by the introduction of Christianity and the prevention or discouragement of many tribal rites, but it is impossible to treat them as mere survivals at the present day. Even young men are affected by such beliefs. For much the same reasons, the chiefs' courts continued to function alongside of the

[1] The Barotse chief receives an annual subsidy of £1,700, together with £850 from the British South Africa Company and £1,500 from the Zambesi saw-mills, as compared to the £60 a year of the Bemba paramount.

7: Richards E-5 (1930-1934) 1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

District Commissioner's courts in spite of thirty years or so of non-recognition. Natives took there the cases they believed the European magistrates did not understand, i.e. ritual matters, affairs with their roots in past history, and certain civil actions. Thus there were still some functions which the people believed the Bemba chief could perform better than all the new white authorities in the territory, besides the great historic tradition behind his authority.

Effects of the 1929 *Ordinances.* By the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances of 1929 a form of Indirect Rule was introduced into Northern Rhodesia, the power of the authorities then instituted being still further extended and more closely defined by a subsequent Ordinance of 1936. Chiefs, and in some cases councils of chiefs, were constituted as native authorities by these measures. They were given jurisdiction over definite territories, and encouraged to issue orders on matters of hygiene, bush-burning, the movement of natives, the constitution of villages, &c. Native courts were also recognized and given jurisdiction over all cases except witchcraft, murder, issues involving Europeans, &c. The chiefs were given salaries, small in actual fact and quite inadequate to the needs of an administrator at the present time,[1] yet in the eyes of natives, who are unaccustomed to see large sums of money at any one time, they were substantial marks of Government favour and often described as such. Clerks and *kapasus* (messengers), at exceedingly low salaries, were also attached to the courts. No financial control was given until recently (1936), when native treasuries were set up.[2]

As far as I could judge,[3] this new policy certainly did much to restore the personal prestige of the chiefs. The loss of an authority which was largely based on ritual was compensated for to some extent by the evident support of the Government. Most Bemba realize clearly that their chiefs are still merely servants of the Administration and note the fact that they cannot imprison or try the most important cases, and that their judgements are liable to be reversed, but they often commented to me on what seemed to

[1] Citimukulu receives £60 per annum, Mwamba £50, and the other chiefs less in proportion. For details showing the inadequacy of these amounts cf. my 'Tribal Government in Transition', *Journ. African Society*, vol. xxxiv, 1935.

[2] The Bemba Treasury had a balance of £143 in 1938 on a sum of £1,303 to be divided between six districts. See *Report* cited on p. 114.

[3] I arrived in the country the year after the introduction of these measures.

7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

177 622 692 them evident signs of favour bestowed by the new policy on their rulers. As we saw, the judicial machinery of the Bemba never really disappeared with the institution of white courts, but the legal recognition of the chiefs' courts by the 1929 Ordinance certainly increased the latter's status tremendously. Successive Government reports have described the new native courts as functioning well, while few charges of excessive fines or hearing fees have been made against the chiefs. Such complaints as I heard seemed to come mainly from educated natives belonging to other areas, particularly from Nyasaland, who found themselves subject for the first time to Bemba law. In the legislative field, determined efforts were made by the district officials to restore the self-confidence of the native authorities and to encourage them, not only to resume functions of government they had lost, but also to take on new tasks, such as the issue of orders as to hygiene, &c. In fact, as regards the personal position of the Bemba chiefs, it may be said that there was a gradual increase in status due to Government support, added to a respect and fear which had never been entirely lost. Their power is in many ways surprising, in view of their poverty, their lack of means to enforce any decisions taken, and the presence in their territories of other authorities in command of their subjects and in particular of large numbers of Christians bound by codes that are not recognized in the chiefs' courts.[1]

177 622 642 645 Apart from the chief's own position, it is necessary to review the political system as a whole. How far was the old machinery of Government re-established by the introduction of the 1929 Ordinances? And, more important still, is such a machinery adapted to the new needs of the tribe? The answer to the first question is a decided, 'No'. The whole balance of authority has been altered, partly by the changed economic position of the chief and partly by lack of Government recognition. We saw that the executive and judicial officials on whom the chief relied were kept together by hope of rewards and food and in some cases in virtue of their religious functions. Nowadays the chief is less able to feed his councillors, principally owing to the decay of the tribute labour system. He does not consider himself obliged to distribute

[1] Some missionary societies have followed the Government policy and have invited chiefs to take a part in school education committees, &c.; others have viewed any increase in the chief's authority as a retrograde step.

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money in the same way as food, and in any case has not sufficient to enable him to reward his people adequately. So that at a time when he is asked to take on new functions of administration his following is becoming smaller and smaller. I have seen Citimukulu hearing cases alone with his paid clerk and watched the *bakabilo* melting away during the midst of the discussion of important matters owing to want of food. This makes an impossible situation which may be changed for the better by the greater measure of financial control which the Government has recently granted to the native authorities,[1] though the sums now allotted to native treasuries are small, and lack of funds has always prevented the compensation of chiefs for the lack of their tribute labour and other perquisites that has occurred in Nigeria, Barotseland, and elsewhere.

Government recognition of the political organization of the tribe and its purposeful adaptation to modern conditions is also essential at the present time. Apart from the economic breakdown at the chiefs' courts which has just been indicated, much of the trouble has been due to the fact that no serious investigation of the judicial, executive, and advisory machinery of Government was made in the first instance. Chiefs were constituted as authorities with little study of the way in which their orders were to be enforced. They were listed as 'members of court', but, though headmen and council were mentioned as eligible to sit on such courts, the presence of the latter was not apparently compulsory. The *bakabilo's* important advisory functions as a tribal council and a potential regency council were not recognized until anthropological research in the area had been made.[1] The unfortunate result was that the chief felt free to act without this former check on his power and openly expressed to me his delight in the fact. The councillors, on the other hand, felt discouraged, and declared: 'The Government likes the chiefs. It does not listen to us, the *Babemba*.' Hence a political system that could never have been described as democratic now provides less check than ever on the chief's authority.

The difficulty from an administrative point of view is evident. Here is a system of political authority based largely on hereditary ritual privilege. To abandon the *bakabilo* council is to do without a body of men with strong traditions of government and a sense of

[1] Twenty-five of the *bakabilo* are now given £1 a year (see *Report* cited, p. 144).

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The success of the movement was from the first overwhelming. It completely captured the people's imagination, and created its myths as it spread. From hut to hut of an evening men shouted the latest exploits of the witch-finders—the number of horns found in such and such a village, or the people miraculously saved from snakes or lions. The Government, which at first allowed the movement to proceed unchecked, was universally praised. 'This is the best thing the Bwanas have ever done for us,' many natives told me. 'Now at last they are allowing us to free our country from witchcraft.' Adverse criticism of missions which refused to allow their Christians to drink the medicine was frequent. The suspicion, and often the accusations of witchcraft commonly made against unpopular Christian teachers, seemed at last to be publicly substantiated. 'If they have nothing to fear,' the natives said, 'why are they afraid to put themselves to the test?' At the cross-roads outside each village was a pile of horns and other magic objects—horns which many missionaries had tried unsuccessfully for years to remove and forbid.

The cause of the success of this movement is therefore of considerable interest, the more so since it is in many ways typical of many such organizations of witch-finders which have sprung up in other parts of Africa. We have to ask ourselves first, then, why the methods of the *Bamucapi* appealed to the natives so strongly? To what fears did they seem to provide such an immediate and universal panacea? These are questions that cannot be answered by a study of the ritual and myths of the *Bamucapi* as an end in themselves. To assess the strength of the movement in any particular area we have to consider it against a background of tribal structure and belief.

In the Bemba country, for instance, it may be said that novelty was enough to account for the success of any native movement, religious or secular. The Babemba are known to be unusually credulous and unstable in temperament, the first to adopt and discard anything new. Nyasaland, the reputed home of the movement, has also a high reputation among Rhodesian natives as the land of high wages and educational facilities, and most of the clerks employed in the country are still of Nyasaland origin. Further, the Babemba are among those African peoples with whom every form of Europeanism is a positive cult. The *Bamucapi* appealed because they presented a dogma that

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satisfied native belief, while their ritual contained many superficial features of the white civilization. The witch-finders came as well-dressed young men, not as wrinkled old native doctors (*yanga*) in greasy bark-cloth. They worked in the open and lined up the natives after the manner of an official taking a census. They sold their medicine in stoppered chemist's bottles rather than in dirty old horns pulled from a skin bag. Their teaching, too, was an interesting blend of the old and the new. Their power, they said, came from Lesa, the High God on whom the *yanga* calls when preparing his medicine, the term being used by the missionary also to describe the Christian God. But curiously enough the efficacy of the medicine depended on the keeping of a number of taboos which are deeply embedded in native belief, such as, for instance, the taboo on a man having intercourse with a woman in the bush. Some natives said that Marya also helped the *Bamucapi*, but added quickly not the Marya of the Catholic missions, but another one; for there is no doubt the movement was anti-mission as a whole. Phrases reminiscent of Christian teaching were also used. The witch-finders addressed the villagers with a preliminary sermon, a technique quite foreign to the native *yanga*, and stressed such ideas as the washing of sins. Kamwende, it will be remembered, descended into the grave and rose again, and was expected to reappear at a second coming. It is interesting, too, that the *Bamucapi* followed the distinctions made by the Roman Catholic missions in the classification of native medicines. Those that contained medicine (*muti*) only were permitted, but those that contained what the Babemba call a *cisimba*, an activating principle, such as an eagle's claw or the bone of a squirrel, were to be forbidden.

But over and above the attraction of novelty there were deeper causes behind the success of the *Bamucapi*. The witch-finders claimed, as I stated, to remove the dangerous weapons of the sorcerer. We have to ask ourselves then, whether the fear of witchcraft is one which dominates native belief. Is black magic, in the sense of a definite ritual actually performed by a man in the belief that it will harm his enemy, very constantly performed among the Babemba?

An analysis of the horns collected by the *Bamucapi* throws an interesting light on this question. I took possession in one instance of the complete heap of horns and magic charms, 139 in all, which had been